

21102713D

HOUSE BILL NO. 2188

Offered January 13, 2021

Prefiled January 13, 2021

A *BILL to require the Department of Health and Department of Environmental Quality, in partnership with the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission, to initiate a three-year pilot program to study the use of engineered septic systems that house and treat sewage effluent in an elevated, self-contained unit suitable for areas with high water tables and susceptible to flooding in Coastal Virginia.*

Patrons—Hodges and Keam; Senators: Kiggans and Lewis

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. *That in furtherance of Virginia's Coastal Resilience Master Plan and Executive Order Twenty-Four, the Department of Health and Department of Environmental Quality, in partnership with the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission, shall initiate a three-year pilot program to analyze engineered septic systems that house and treat all sewage effluent in a vertically elevated, self-contained unit suitable for areas with high water tables and flooding in Coastal Virginia. The engineered septic unit created pursuant to this act shall have no physical contact with land, will be vertically elevated out of any floodplains, and will be designated to meet pollution removal standards of the Department of Health. Elevated components include the treatment unit, holding tanks, and drain field components. Treated sewage discharge may include surface, engineered wetland, or other appropriate discharge approaches. To support the pilot program, the Department of Health and Department of Environmental Quality, in partnership with the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission, will partner with a participating institution of the Virginia Sea Grant.*

§ 2. *By December 1 of each year, the Department of Health and Department of Environmental Quality shall coordinate to publish and submit a report to the Governor and General Assembly with the following information: (i) the feasibility of elevating the parts of septic systems vulnerable to rising sea levels; (ii) optimal system design, or range of designs, for vertically elevated septic systems capable of withstanding sea level rise and chronic flooding that meets effluent standards; (iii) recommendations for legal or regulatory changes, if any, to authorize the use of vertically elevated septic systems; (iv) recommendations for amending current septic system permit requirements to allow for the use of vertically elevated septic systems; (v) recommendations for financing the installation of vertically elevated septic systems; (vi) the expected date for when the pilot program will be completed; and (vii) any other pertinent information.*