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HOUSE BILL NO. 2203

Offered January 13, 2021
Prefiled January 13, 2021

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 3.2 a chapter numbered 47.1, consisting of sections numbered 3.2-4780 through 3.2-4783, relating to the Virginia Agriculture Food Assistance Program and Fund; established.

Patrons—Filler-Corn, Gooditis, McQuinn, Tyler, Willett, Adams, D.M., Askew, Ayala, Bagby, Bulova, Carr, Cole, J.G., Guy, Guzman, Hayes, Helmer, Hope, Hurst, Jenkins, Keam, Levine, Lopez, Mugler, Mundon King, Murphy, Plum, Rasoul, Reid, Samirah, Sickles, Simon, Simonds, Subramanyam, Sullivan, Tran, Watts and Williams Graves

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 3.2 a chapter numbered 47.1, consisting of sections numbered 3.2-4780 through 3.2-4783, as follows:

CHAPTER 47.1.

VIRGINIA AGRICULTURE FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

§ 3.2-4780. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Charitable food assistance organization" means an organization operating in Virginia that provides nutrition assistance to relieve situations of emergency and distress through the provision of food to needy persons in Virginia.

"Fund" means the Virginia Agriculture Food Assistance Fund.

"VAFA Program" means the Virginia Agriculture Food Assistance Program.

§ 3.2-4781. Virginia Agriculture Food Assistance Fund.

There is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting fund to be known as the Virginia Agriculture Food Assistance Fund, referred to in this section as "the Fund." The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller. All funds appropriated for such purpose and any gifts, donations, grants, bequests, and other funds received on its behalf shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the Fund. Interest earned on moneys in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any moneys remaining in the Fund, including interest thereon, at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Moneys in the Fund shall be used solely for the purposes of carrying out the provisions of this chapter. Expenditures and disbursements from the Fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Commissioner.

§ 3.2-4782. Authority of Commissioner.

A. The Commissioner shall establish the Virginia Agriculture Food Assistance Program (VAFA Program) for Virginia farmers and food producers to donate, sell, or otherwise provide agriculture products to charitable food assistance organizations.

B. The Commissioner may contract with charitable food assistance organizations operating in Virginia or regional charitable food assistance organizations to carry out the provisions of this chapter.

C. The Commissioner shall provide grants from the Fund to charitable food assistance organizations to reimburse farmers or food producers for any costs associated with harvesting, processing, packaging, or transporting agriculture products donated, sold, or otherwise provided to such charitable food assistance organizations.

D. The Commissioner may develop guidelines and adopt regulations to carry out the provisions of this chapter.

§ 3.2-4783. Virginia Agriculture Food Assistance Program.

The VAFA Program shall:

1. Provide grants from the Fund to charitable food assistance organizations to reimburse farmers or food producers for any costs associated with harvesting, processing, packaging, or transporting agriculture products donated to such charitable food assistance organizations; and

2. Distribute agriculture products to needy persons in Virginia in accordance with the food distribution guidelines for each charitable food assistance organization.

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