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HOUSE BILL NO. 1075

Offered January 10, 2024

Prefiled January 10, 2024

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 22.1 a chapter numbered 28, consisting of sections numbered 22.1-381 through 22.1-384, relating to Board of Education; Imagination Library of Virginia Program and Fund established.*

Patrons—Coyner and Tata

Referred to Committee on Appropriations

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 22.1 a chapter numbered 28, consisting of sections numbered 22.1-381 through 22.1-384, as follows:

CHAPTER 28.

IMAGINATION LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA PROGRAM AND FUND.

§ 22.1-381. Definitions.

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

"Affiliate" means the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Affiliate as established in this chapter.

"Eligible child" means any child under five years of age who resides in the Commonwealth.

"Fund" means the Imagination Library of Virginia Fund as established in this chapter.

"Program" means the Imagination Library of Virginia Program as established in this chapter.

"Reading selection" means any high-quality, age-appropriate book provided to an eligible child under the Program.

§ 22.1-382. Imagination Library of Virginia Program and Fund established.

A. *The Imagination Library of Virginia Program is established as a statewide program for the purpose of encouraging preschool-age children to read by providing one reading selection per month to the home of each registered child from birth to age five at no cost to such child's family. The parent of any eligible child in the Commonwealth may register such child to receive a monthly reading selection mailed directly to such child's home through the Program. A parent with more than one eligible child may register each such child in the Program at no additional cost.*

B. *There is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting fund to be known as the Imagination Library of Virginia 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 supporting and promoting the Program in order to encourage children in the Commonwealth to develop a love of reading and learning. 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 Superintendent.*

C. *The Fund shall be used to provide, through Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, one reading selection per month to each registered child from birth to age five in each school division and to ensure that each such book is sent to the home of the registered child at no cost to the family of such child.*

§ 22.1-383. Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Affiliate established; collaboration with and between local school boards.

A. *The Board shall establish an entity to be known as Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Affiliate to serve as the statewide affiliate of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library and to collaborate with each school board in mailing monthly reading selections directly to the residence of each eligible child registered in the Program at no cost to the family of such child.*

B. *Each local school board shall serve as the local partner for the Program for its respective school division and shall collaborate with the Affiliate to coordinate and manage the activities of the Program for such school division. As a local partner, each local school board shall, in collaboration with the Affiliate:*

1. Provide one reading selection per month to each registered child in such school board's school division, beginning as early as such child's birth month through the month in which such child reaches five years of age. The costs incurred from providing such reading selections to each such registered child shall, subject to appropriation, be reimbursed to each local school board through the Program;

2. Identify and locate families with an eligible child residing within such school division and

59 encourage such families to register each eligible child for the Program; and

60 3. Manage any undelivered monthly reading selections, including attempting to locate or contact the
61 family of any registered child for whom an undelivered monthly reading selection was intended and
62 handling any undelivered monthly reading selection for which the family of the registered child who was
63 the intended recipient could not be located or contacted.

64 C. In the implementation of and compliance with the provisions of this chapter, a local school board
65 may, in coordination with the Department, enter into an agreement, partnership, or similar arrangement
66 with an adjacent local school board. In the event that a local school board finds that no adjacent
67 school board provides reading selections to registered children under the Program, such local school
68 board may request assistance from the Department and the Affiliate.

69 **§ 22.1-384. Board to administer Program; duties.**

70 A. The Board shall administer the Program. In administering the Program, the Board shall:

71 1. Manage the daily operations of the Program or delegate such management to the Department, the
72 Affiliate, or such other entity as the Board may deem appropriate;

73 2. Coordinate with local organizations and each local school board to advance and strengthen the
74 Program with the goal of promoting enrollment growth to reach all preschool-age children in the
75 Commonwealth;

76 3. Develop, promote, and coordinate a public awareness program to (i) make donors aware of the
77 opportunity to donate to the Program and Fund and (ii) increase public awareness of the opportunity to
78 register eligible children to receive reading selections at no cost on a monthly basis;

79 4. Include in any budget request for each school year a plan to distribute sufficient moneys to each
80 school division to allow it to provide reading selections to each registered child within such school
81 division under the Program; and

82 5. Provide an annual report to the Senate Committee on Education and Health and the House
83 Committee on Education detailing the activities of the Program for the immediately preceding year,
84 including (i) the total appropriations received by and expenditures made from the Fund, (ii) the number
85 of participating local programs, (iii) the number of children registered in the Program, and (iv) the
86 number of books sent to registered children.

87 B. The Board may develop such guidelines as it deems necessary and appropriate for the
88 development and administration of the Program and Fund.

89 **2. That the provisions of this act shall expire on January 1, 2029.**