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**SENATE BILL NO. 314**

Offered January 10, 2024

Prefiled January 9, 2024

*A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 22.1-23.4, relating to Department of Education; establishment of Farm to School Program Task Force.*

Patrons—Roem and Craig

Referred to Committee on Education and Health

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 22.1-23.4 as follows:**

**§ 22.1-23.4. Department; Farm to School Program Task Force.**

*A. As used in this section, "farm to school program" means any program (i) whereby public schools purchase and feature prominently in school meals locally produced food or (ii) that involves experiential student learning opportunities relating to local food and agriculture, including school and community garden programs and local farm visits.*

*B. The Department shall establish and appoint such members as it deems necessary or appropriate to the Farm to School Program Task Force (the Task Force) for the purpose of increasing student access to high-quality farm to school programs throughout the Commonwealth.*

*C. The Task Force shall collaborate with local school boards, community-based organizations, farmers, relevant state and local agencies, and other relevant stakeholders to (i) assess existing farm to school programs within the Commonwealth to identify and disseminate to each local school board best practices for implementing and sustaining such programs, (ii) establish and distribute to each local school board a guidance document for the establishment and operation of school garden programs, (iii) provide information and resources to each local school board to assist it in leveraging grant funds to support farm to school programs, and (iv) collect such data and make such policy recommendations to local school boards, the Board, and the General Assembly as it deems appropriate.*

INTRODUCED

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