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HOUSE BILL NO. 561

Offered January 25, 1994

A BILL to amend and reenact § 19.2-243 of the Code of Virginia, relating to speedy trial.

Patrons—Reynolds and Armstrong; Senator: Goode

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 19.2-243 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 19.2-243. Limitation on prosecution of felony due to lapse of time after finding of probable cause; misdemeanors; exceptions.

Where a general district court has found that there is probable cause to believe that the accused has committed a felony, the accused, if he is held continuously in custody thereafter, shall be forever discharged from prosecution for such offense if no trial is commenced in the circuit court within five months from the date such probable cause was found by the district court; and if the accused is not held in custody but has been recognized for his appearance in the circuit court to answer for such offense, he shall be forever discharged from prosecution therefor if no trial is commenced in the circuit court within nine months from the date such probable cause was found.

If there was no preliminary hearing in the district court, or if such preliminary hearing was waived by the accused, the commencement of the running of the five and nine months periods, respectively, set forth in this section, shall be from the date an indictment or presentment is found against the accused.

If an indictment or presentment is found against the accused but he has not been arrested for the offense charged therein, the five and nine months periods, respectively, shall commence to run from the date of his arrest thereon.

Where a case is before a circuit court on appeal from a conviction of a misdemeanor or traffic infraction in a district court, the accused shall be forever discharged from prosecution for such offense if the trial de novo in the circuit court is not commenced (i) within five months from the date of the conviction if the accused has been held continuously in custody or (ii) within nine months of the date of the conviction if the accused has been recognized for his appearance in the circuit court.

The provisions of this section shall not apply to such period of time as the failure to try the accused was caused:

(1) ~~1.~~ By his insanity or by reason of his confinement in a hospital for care and observation;

(2) ~~2.~~ By the witnesses for the Commonwealth being enticed or kept away, or prevented from attending by sickness or accident;

(3) ~~3.~~ By the granting of a separate trial at the request of a person indicted jointly with others for a felony;

(4) ~~4.~~ By continuance granted on the motion of the accused or his counsel, or by concurrence *or acquiescence* of the accused or his counsel in such a motion by the attorney for the Commonwealth, or by reason of his escaping from jail or failing to appear according to his recognizance; *failure of the accused or his counsel to make a timely objection to a trial date set beyond the time limits prescribed by this section shall be deemed to be acquiescence to the continuance;* ~~or~~

(5) ~~5.~~ By the inability of the jury to agree in their verdict; *or*

6. *By the accused's demand for a jury trial made on a date set for trial if counsel for the accused had previously represented to the court that trial by jury would be waived.*

But the time during the pendency of any appeal in any appellate court shall not be included as applying to the provisions of this section.

INTRODUCED

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