

LD0553346

## HOUSE BILL NO. 926

Offered January 25, 1994

*A BILL to amend and reenact § 55-79.84 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Condominium Act; lien for assessments.*

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Patron—McClure

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Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That § 55-79.84 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 55-79.84. Lien for assessments.

A. The unit owners' association shall have a lien on every condominium unit for unpaid assessments levied against that condominium unit in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and all lawful provisions of the condominium instruments. The said lien, once perfected, shall be prior to all other liens and encumbrances except (i) real estate tax liens on that condominium unit, (ii) liens and encumbrances recorded prior to the recordation of the declaration, and (iii) sums unpaid on any first mortgages or first deeds of trust recorded prior to the perfection of said lien for assessments and securing institutional lenders. The provisions of this subsection shall not affect the priority of mechanics' and materialmen's liens.

B. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, or any other provision of law requiring documents to be recorded in the miscellaneous lien books or the deed books in the clerk's office of any court, on or after July 1, 1974, all memoranda of liens arising under this section shall, in the discretion of the clerk, be recorded in the miscellaneous lien books or the deed books in such clerk's office. Any such memorandum shall be indexed in the general index to deeds, and such general index shall identify the lien as a lien for condominium assessments.

C. The unit owners' association, in order to perfect the lien given by this section, shall file before the expiration of ninety days from the time such assessment became due and payable in the clerk's office in the county or city in which such condominium is situated, a memorandum, verified by the oath of the principal officer of the unit owners' association, or such other officer or officers as the condominium instruments may specify, which contains the following:

1. A description of the condominium unit in accordance with the provisions of § 55-79.47.
2. The name or names of the persons constituting the unit owners of that condominium unit.
3. The amount of unpaid assessments currently due or past due together with the date when each fell due.
4. The date of issuance of the memorandum.

It shall be the duty of the clerk in whose office such memorandum shall be filed as hereinabove provided to record and index the same as provided in subsection B, in the names of the persons identified therein as well as in the name of the unit owners' association. The cost of recording such memorandum shall be taxed against the person found liable in any judgment or decree enforcing such lien.

D. No suit to enforce any lien perfected under subsection C shall be brought after twenty-four months from the time when the memorandum of lien was recorded; provided, however, that the filing of a petition to enforce any such lien in any suit wherein such petition may be properly filed shall be regarded as the institution of a suit under this section; and provided further that nothing herein shall extend the time within which any such lien may be perfected.

E. The judgment or decree in an action brought pursuant to this section shall include, without limitation, reimbursement for costs and attorneys' fees, together with interest at the maximum lawful rate for the sums secured by the lien from the time each such sum became due and payable.

F. When payment or satisfaction is made of a debt secured by the lien perfected by subsection C, said lien shall be released in accordance with the provisions of § 55-66.3. For the purposes of that section the principal officer of the unit owners' association, or such other officer or officers as the condominium instruments may specify, shall be deemed the duly authorized agent of the lien creditor.

G. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit actions at law to recover sums for which subsection A creates a lien, maintainable pursuant to § 55-79.53.

H. Any unit owner or purchaser of a condominium unit, having executed a contract for the disposition of the same, shall be entitled upon request to a recordable statement setting forth the amount of unpaid assessments currently levied against that unit. Such request shall be in writing, directed to the principal officer of the unit owners' association or to such other officer as the condominium instruments

**60** may specify. Failure to furnish or make available such a statement within ten days of the receipt of such  
**61** request shall extinguish the lien created by subsection A as to the condominium unit involved. Such  
**62** statement shall be binding on the unit owners' association, the executive organ, and every unit owner.  
**63** Payment of a fee not exceeding ten dollars may be required as a prerequisite to the issuance of such a  
**64** statement if the condominium instruments so provide.