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HOUSE BILL NO. 2081

Offered January 20, 1999

A BILL to amend and reenact § 10.1-1107 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Department of Forestry.

Patrons—Baker, Abbitt, Albo, Day, Guest, Jackson, Katzen, Kilgore, Tate, Thomas, Weatherholtz and Williams; Senators: Bolling, Hawkins, Marye and Puckett

Referred to Committee on Agriculture

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 10.1-1107 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 10.1-1107. Purchase of lands and acceptance of gifts for forestry purposes by the State Forester; management; definition of state forests.

A. The State Forester shall have authority to purchase in the name of the Commonwealth lands suitable for state forests. He may accept for state forest purposes gifts of land and money to the Commonwealth for forestry purposes, which gifts shall be absolute, except that mineral and bequests of real and personal property as well as endowments, funds, and grants from any source. Unless otherwise restricted by the terms of the gift or bequest, the State Forester is authorized, in the name of the Commonwealth, to convey or lease any such real property given or bequeathed to it, subject to the consent and approval of the Governor and the General Assembly and the approval of the instrument as to form by the Attorney General. Mineral and mining rights over and under land donated may be reserved by the donors and the land shall be administered as state forests.

B. The State Forester shall have the power and authority to accept gifts, donations and contributions of land, and to enter into agreements for the acquisition by purchase, lease or otherwise with, the United States, or any agency or agent thereof, of lands for state forests.

C. The State Forester shall have authority to provide for the management, development and utilization of any lands purchased, leased or otherwise acquired, to sell or otherwise dispose of products on or derived from the land, and to enforce regulations governing state forests, the care and maintenance thereof, and the prevention of trespassing thereon, and such other regulations deemed necessary to carry out the provisions of this section. Approval by the General Assembly shall not be required for the sale or harvesting of timber or minerals on state forest lands or other lands over which the Department has supervision and control.

D. In exercising the powers conferred by this section, the State Forester shall not obligate the Commonwealth for any expenditure in excess of any funds either donated or appropriated to the Department for such purpose.

E. One-fourth of the gross proceeds derived from any lands so acquired by the State Forester shall be paid annually by the State Forester to the counties in which such lands are respectively located, and shall become a part of the general funds of such counties.

F. As used in this chapter unless the context requires a different meaning, "state forest" means lands acquired for the Commonwealth by purchase, gift or lease pursuant to this section. These lands shall be managed and protected for scientific, recreational and educational purposes. Uses of the state forests shall include, but not be limited to, research, demonstrations, tours, soil and water management and protection, hunting, fishing and other recreational activities.

G. All acquisitions of real property under this section shall be subject to the provisions of § 2.1-504.2. The Attorney General shall approve the form of the instruments prior to execution.

INTRODUCED

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