

1999 SESSION

INTRODUCED

983228661

SENATE BILL NO. 492

Offered January 26, 1998

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 10.1-2132 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Water Quality Improvement Grants for education.*

Patron—Gartlan

Referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 10.1-2132 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 10.1-2132. Nonpoint source pollution funding; conditions for approval.

A. The Department of Conservation and Recreation shall be the lead state agency for determining the appropriateness of any grant related to nonpoint source pollution to be made from the Fund to restore, protect and improve the quality of state waters.

B. The Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation shall, subject to available funds and in coordination with the Director of the Department of Environmental Quality, direct the State Treasurer to make Water Quality Improvement Grants in accordance with the guidelines established pursuant to § 10.1-2129. The Director shall manage the allocation of grants from the Fund to ensure the full funding of executed grant agreements.

C. Grant funding may be made available to local governments, soil and water conservation districts and individuals who propose specific initiatives that are clearly demonstrated as likely to achieve reductions in nonpoint source pollution, including excess nutrients, to improve the quality of state waters. Such projects may include, but are in no way limited to, the acquisition of conservation easements related to the protection of water quality and stream buffers; conservation planning and design assistance to develop nutrient management plans for agricultural operations; implementation of cost-effective nutrient reduction practices; *education efforts aimed at improving water quality*; and reimbursement to local governments for tax credits and other kinds of authorized local tax relief that provides incentives for water quality improvement. The Director shall give initial priority consideration to the distribution of grants from the Fund for the purposes of implementing the tributary plans required by Article 2 (§ 2.1-51.12:1 et seq.) of Chapter 5.1 of Title 2.1. Until such time as the tributary plans are developed and implemented, the Director shall distribute fifty percent of the nonpoint grant funding to their implementation and fifty percent to areas of the Commonwealth not to be covered by the tributary plans, unless otherwise provided in the general appropriation act.

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