

2006 SESSION

LEGISLATION NOT PREPARED BY DLS
INTRODUCED

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HOUSE BILL NO. 1571

Offered January 20, 2006

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 24.2-687 of the Code of Virginia, relating to authorization for distribution of information on referendum elections.*

Patrons—Scott, E.T.; Senator: Houck

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 24.2-687 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 24.2-687. Authorization for distribution of information on referendum elections.

A. The governing body of any county, ~~or city or town~~ may provide for the preparation and printing of an explanation for each referendum question to be submitted to the voters of the county, ~~or city or town~~ to be distributed at the polling places on the day of the referendum election. The governing body may have the explanation published by paid advertisement in a newspaper with general circulation in the county, ~~or city or town~~ one or more times preceding the referendum.

The explanation shall contain the ballot question and a statement of not more than 500 words on the proposed question. The explanation shall be presented in plain English, shall be limited to a neutral explanation, and shall not present arguments by either proponents or opponents of the proposal. The attorney for the county, ~~or city or town~~ or, if there is no county, ~~or city or town~~ attorney, the attorney for the Commonwealth shall prepare the explanation. "Plain English" means written in nontechnical, readily understandable language using words of common everyday usage and avoiding legal terms and phrases or other terms and words of art whose usage or special meaning primarily is limited to a particular field or profession.

B. Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit a county, ~~or city or town~~ from disseminating other neutral materials or advertisements concerning issues of public concern that are the subject of a referendum; however, the materials or advertisements shall not advocate the passage or defeat of the referendum question.

C. This section shall not be applicable to statewide referenda.

D. Any failure to comply with the provisions of this section shall not affect the validity of the referendum.

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