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HOUSE BILL NO. 2962

Offered January 10, 2007

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A BILL to establish licensing and inspection criteria for life-sharing communities.

Patrons—Bell and Moran

Referred to Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. § 1. Life-sharing communities.***A. For the purposes of this section:*

"Life-sharing community" is defined as a residential setting, operated by a non-profit organization, that (i) offers a safe environment in free standing, self-contained homes for residents that have been determined by a licensed health-care professional as having at least one developmental disability; (ii) is an environment located in a community setting where residents participate in therapeutic activities including artistic crafts, stewardship of the land, and agricultural activities; (iii) consists of the residents as well as staff and volunteers who live together in residential homes; (iv) operates at a ratio of at least one staff member, volunteer, or supervising personnel for every three residents in each self-contained home household; and (v) has at least one supervisory staff member on premises to be responsible for the care, safety, and supervision of the residents at all times.

"Resident" means an individual who has been determined by a physician or nurse practitioner to have at least one developmental disability and who resides at the life-sharing community on a full-time basis.

"Volunteer" means an individual who resides in the life-sharing community on a full-time basis and who assists residents with their daily activities and receives no wages. A volunteer may receive a small stipend for personal expenses.

B. Any facility seeking to operate as a life-sharing community shall file with the Commissioner: (i) a statement of intent to operate as a life-sharing community; (ii) a certification that at the time of admission, a contract and written notice was provided to each resident and his legally authorized representative that includes a statement of disclosure that the facility is exempt from licensure as an "assisted living facility," and (iii) documentary evidence that such life-sharing community is a private non-profit organization in accordance with 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

C. Upon filing an initial statement of intent to operate as a life-sharing community, and every two years thereafter, the life-sharing community shall certify that the local health department, building inspector, fire marshal, or other local official designated by the locality to enforce the Statewide Fire Prevention Code, and any other local official required by law to inspect the premises, have inspected the physical facilities of the life-sharing community and have determined that the facility is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations with regard to food service activities, health and sanitation, water supply, building codes, and the Statewide Fire Prevention Code and the Uniform Statewide Building Code.

D. Upon filing an initial statement of intent to operate as a life-sharing community, and every two years thereafter, the life-sharing community shall provide the Commissioner documentary evidence that:

1. Life-sharing community staff and volunteers have completed a training program that includes instruction in personal care of residents, house management, and therapeutic activities;

2. Volunteers and staff have completed first aid and Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation training;

3. Each resident's needs are evaluated using the Uniform Assessment Instrument, and Individual Service Plans are developed for each resident annually;

4. The residents of the life-sharing community are each 21 years of age or older;

5. A criminal background check through the Criminal Records Exchange has been completed for each (i) full-time salaried staff member and (ii) volunteer as defined in this section.

E. A residential facility operating as a life-sharing facility shall be exempt from the licensing requirements of Article 1 (§ 63.2-1800 et seq.) of Chapter 18 of Title 63.2 applicable to assisted living facilities.

F. The Commissioner may perform unannounced on-site inspections of a life-sharing community to determine compliance with the provisions of this section and to investigate any complaint that the life-sharing community is not in compliance with the provisions of this section, or to otherwise ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the life-sharing community residents. The Commissioner may revoke

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59 *the exemption from licensure pursuant to this chapter for any life-sharing community for serious or*
60 *repeated violation of the requirements of this section and order that the facility cease operations or*
61 *comply with the licensure requirements of an assisted living facility. If a life-sharing community does*
62 *not file the statement and documentary evidence required by this section, the Commissioner shall give*
63 *reasonable notice to such life-sharing community of the nature of its noncompliance and may thereafter*
64 *take action as he determines appropriate, including a suit to enjoin the operation of the life-sharing*
65 *community.*

66 *G. All life-sharing communities shall provide access to their facilities and residents by staff of*
67 *community services boards and behavioral health authorities as defined in § 37.2-100 for the purpose of*
68 *(i) assessing or evaluating, (ii) providing case management or other services or assistance, or (iii)*
69 *monitoring the care of consumers residing in the facility. Such staff or contractual agents also shall be*
70 *given reasonable access to other facility residents who have previously requested their services.*

71 *H. Any residents of any life-sharing community shall be accorded the same rights and responsibilities*
72 *as residents in assisted living facilities as provided in subsections A through F of § 63.2-1808.*

73 *I. A life-sharing community shall not admit or retain individuals with any of the conditions or care*
74 *needs as provided in subsection C of § 63.2-1805.*

75 *J. Notwithstanding § 63.2-1805, at the request of the resident, hospice care may be provided in a*
76 *life-sharing community under the same requirements for hospice programs provided in Article 7*
77 *(§ 32.1-162.1 et seq.) of Chapter 5 of Title 32.1 if the hospice program determines that such a program*
78 *is appropriate for the resident.*