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**HOUSE BILL NO. 1480**

Offered January 9, 2013

Prefiled January 2, 2013

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 54.1-2344 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Real Estate Board; authority to hear fair housing violations by real estate licensees.*

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Patron—Farrell

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Referred to Committee on General Laws

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That § 54.1-2344 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****§ 54.1-2344. Fair Housing Board; membership; terms; chairman; powers and duties.**

A. The Fair Housing Board shall be composed of 12 members, to be appointed by the Governor, as follows: one representative of local government, one architect licensed in accordance with Chapter 4 (§ 54.1-400 et seq.) of this title, one representative of the mortgage lending industry, one representative of the property and casualty insurance industry, two representatives of the residential property management industry not licensed in accordance with Chapter 21 (§ 54.1-2100 et seq.) of this title, at least one of whom is a member of a property owners' association or condominium unit owners' association, one contractor licensed in accordance with Chapter 11 (§ 54.1-1100 et seq.) of this title, one representative of the disability community, one representative of the residential land lease industry subject to Chapter 13.3 (§ 55-248.41 et seq.) of Title 55, and three citizen members selected in accordance with § 54.1-107. All terms of Board members shall be for terms of four years.

B. The Board shall elect a chairman from its membership.

C. The Board shall adopt a seal by which it shall authenticate its proceedings.

D. The Board shall be responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Fair Housing Law. However, the Board shall have no authority with respect to a real estate broker, real estate salesperson, real estate brokerage firm licensed in accordance with Chapter 21 (§ 54.1-2100 et seq.), or their agents or employees who have allegedly violated, or who have in fact violated, the Fair Housing Law. *In any case in which there are multiple respondents and one of the respondents is a real estate licensee, the case involving the real estate licensee and the respondent who is not a real estate licensee shall be heard by the Real Estate Board. In no event shall the jurisdiction be split between the Real Estate Board and the Board on the same such case.*

The Board shall have the power and duty to establish, by regulation, an education-based certification or registration program for persons subject to the Fair Housing Law who are involved in the business or activity of selling or renting dwellings. The Board shall also establish, by regulation, educational materials on the Fair Housing Law and require a signed affidavit from persons in the business or activity of selling or renting dwellings, that they have read and understood the provided materials. The Board shall have the authority to approve training courses and instructors in furtherance of the provisions of this chapter.

No education-based program established by the Board shall require Board certification or registration where an individual holds a valid license issued by the Real Estate Board. Any courses approved by the Real Estate Board to meet the fair housing requirement of § 54.1-2105.03 and the instructors approved by the Real Estate Board to teach continuing education courses in accordance with § 54.1-2105.02 shall not require additional approval by the Fair Housing Board to meet any education requirements in this section and in the regulations of the Fair Housing Board.

INTRODUCED

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