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SENATE BILL NO. 1341

Offered January 19, 2015

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 62.1-256.1, relating to establishment of the Eastern Virginia Groundwater Management Advisory Committee.*

Patron—Norment

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 62.1-256.1 as follows:****§ 62.1-256.1. Eastern Virginia Groundwater Management Advisory Committee established.**

A. The Eastern Virginia Groundwater Management Advisory Committee (the Committee) is hereby established as an advisory committee to assist the Department of Environmental Quality in developing, revising, and implementing a management strategy for ground water in the Eastern Virginia Groundwater Management Area. The Committee shall be appointed by the Director of the Department of Environmental Quality and shall be composed of nonlegislative citizen members consisting of representatives of industrial and municipal water users; representatives of public and private water providers; developers and representatives from the economic development community; representatives of agricultural, conservation, and environmental organizations; state and federal agencies officials; and university faculty with expertise in water resources-related issues. The Committee shall meet at least four times each calendar year.

Members of the Committee shall receive no compensation for their service and shall not be entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

B. The Committee shall examine (i) options for developing a long-term alternative water source, including water reclamation and reuse, ground water recharge, desalination, and surface water options, including creation of storage reservoirs; (ii) local and regional water supply plans within the Eastern Groundwater Management Area for purposes of determining water demand and possible solutions for meeting that demand; (iii) potential funding options both for study and for implementation of management options; (iv) alternative management structures, including a water resource trading program, formation of a long-term ground water management committee, and formation of a commission; (v) additional data needed to more fully assess aquifer health and sustainable ground water management strategies; (vi) current ground water permitting criteria; and (vii) other policies and procedures that the Director of the Department of Environmental Quality determines may enhance the effectiveness of ground water management in the Eastern Virginia Groundwater Management Area.

C. The Board and the Department of Environmental Quality shall take no action to require reductions in permitted volumes of ground water withdrawals until the reports required by subsection D have been presented at a meeting of the State Water Commission.

D. The Committee shall report the results of its examination and related recommendations to the Department of Environmental Quality no later than August 1, 2017. The Department of Environmental Quality shall issue a report responding to the Committee's recommendations no later than November 1, 2017.

2. That the provisions of this act shall expire on January 1, 2018.

INTRODUCED

SB1341