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HOUSE BILL NO. 233

Offered January 10, 2018

Prefiled December 31, 2017

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 15.2-943.1 and to repeal § 15.2-1129.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to arts and cultural districts.*

Patrons—Hope and Ayala

Referred to Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 15.2-943.1 as follows:****§ 15.2-943.1. Creation of arts and cultural districts.**

A. Any locality, or combination of localities, may by ordinance, or in the case of multiple localities by substantially similar ordinances, establish within the boundaries of such localities one or more arts and cultural districts for the purpose of increasing awareness and support for the arts and culture in the locality. The locality may provide incentives for the support and creation of arts and cultural venues in each district. The locality may also grant tax incentives and provide certain regulatory flexibility in each arts and cultural district.

B. The tax incentives for each district may be provided for up to 10 years and may include, but not be limited to, (i) reduction of permit fees, (ii) reduction of user fees, (iii) reduction of any type of gross receipts tax, and (iv) rebate of real estate property taxes. The extent and duration of such incentive proposals shall conform to the requirements of the Constitutions of Virginia and of the United States.

C. Each locality may also provide for regulatory flexibility in each district that may include, but not be limited to, (i) special zoning for the district, (ii) permit process reform, (iii) exemption from ordinances, and (iv) any other incentive adopted by ordinance, which shall be binding upon the locality for a period of up to 10 years.

2. That § 15.2-1129.1 of the Code of Virginia is repealed.**3. That the provisions of this act are declaratory of existing law.****4. That the provisions of the second enactment of this act shall not affect the powers of any locality that has adopted an ordinance pursuant to § 15.2-1129.1 of the Code of Virginia prior to the effective date of this act.**