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HOUSE BILL NO. 1174

Offered January 10, 2024

Prefiled January 10, 2024

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 18.2-308.2:2 of the Code of Virginia, relating to assault firearms; purchase; age requirement; penalty.*

Patrons—Sickles, Lopez, Carr, Cohen and Henson

Referred to Committee on Public Safety

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 18.2-308.2:2 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 18.2-308.2:2. Criminal history record information check required for the transfer of certain firearms.

A. Any person purchasing from a dealer a firearm as herein defined shall consent in writing, on a form to be provided by the Department of State Police, to have the dealer obtain criminal history record information, *and if such firearm is an assault firearm as defined in this section, such person purchasing such assault firearm shall be 21 years of age or older.* Such form shall include only the written consent; the name, birth date, gender, race, citizenship, and social security number and/or any other identification number; the number of firearms by category intended to be sold, rented, traded, or transferred; and answers by the applicant to the following questions: (i) has the applicant been convicted of a felony offense or a misdemeanor offense listed in § 18.2-308.1:8 or found guilty or adjudicated delinquent as a juvenile 14 years of age or older at the time of the offense of a delinquent act that if committed by an adult would be a felony or a misdemeanor listed in § 18.2-308.1:8; (ii) is the applicant subject to a court order restraining the applicant from harassing, stalking, or threatening the applicant's child or intimate partner, or a child of such partner, or is the applicant subject to a protective order; (iii) has the applicant ever been acquitted by reason of insanity and prohibited from purchasing, possessing, or transporting a firearm pursuant to § 18.2-308.1:1 or any substantially similar law of any other jurisdiction, been adjudicated legally incompetent, mentally incapacitated, or adjudicated an incapacitated person and prohibited from purchasing a firearm pursuant to § 18.2-308.1:2 or any substantially similar law of any other jurisdiction, been involuntarily admitted to an inpatient facility or involuntarily ordered to outpatient mental health treatment and prohibited from purchasing a firearm pursuant to § 18.2-308.1:3 or any substantially similar law of any other jurisdiction, or been the subject of a temporary detention order pursuant to § 37.2-809 and subsequently agreed to a voluntary admission pursuant to § 37.2-805; and (iv) is the applicant subject to an emergency substantial risk order or a substantial risk order entered pursuant to § 19.2-152.13 or 19.2-152.14 and prohibited from purchasing, possessing, or transporting a firearm pursuant to § 18.2-308.1:6 or any substantially similar law of any other jurisdiction.

B. 1. No dealer shall sell, rent, trade, or transfer from his inventory any such firearm to any other person who is a resident of Virginia until he has (i) obtained written consent and the other information on the consent form specified in subsection A, and provided the Department of State Police with the name, birth date, gender, race, citizenship, and social security and/or any other identification number and the number of firearms by category intended to be sold, rented, traded, or transferred ~~and~~; (ii) requested criminal history record information by a telephone call to or other communication authorized by the State Police and is authorized by subdivision 2 to complete the sale or other such transfer; *and (iii) if such firearm is an assault firearm, verified that such person is 21 years of age or older.* To establish personal identification and residence in Virginia for purposes of this section, a dealer must require any prospective purchaser to present one photo-identification form issued by a governmental agency of the Commonwealth or by the United States Department of Defense or a special identification card without a photograph issued pursuant to § 46.2-345.2 that demonstrates that the prospective purchaser resides in Virginia. For the purposes of this section and establishment of residency for firearm purchase, residency of a member of the armed forces shall include both the state in which the member's permanent duty post is located and any nearby state in which the member resides and from which he commutes to the permanent duty post. A member of the armed forces whose photo identification issued by the Department of Defense does not have a Virginia address may establish his Virginia residency with such photo identification and either permanent orders assigning the purchaser to a duty post, including the Pentagon, in Virginia or the purchaser's Leave and Earnings Statement. When the identification presented to a dealer by the prospective purchaser is a driver's license or other photo identification issued by the Department of Motor Vehicles or a special identification card without a photograph issued pursuant to § 46.2-345.2, and such identification form or card contains a date of issue, the dealer shall

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59 not, except for a renewed driver's license or other photo identification issued by the Department of
60 Motor Vehicles or a renewed special identification card without a photograph issued pursuant to
61 § 46.2-345.2, sell or otherwise transfer a firearm to the prospective purchaser until 30 days after the date
62 of issue of an original or duplicate driver's license or special identification card without a photograph
63 unless the prospective purchaser also presents a copy of his Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles
64 driver's record showing that the original date of issue of the driver's license was more than 30 days prior
65 to the attempted purchase.

66 In addition, no dealer shall sell, rent, trade, or transfer from his inventory any assault firearm to any
67 person who is not a citizen of the United States or who is not a person lawfully admitted for permanent
68 residence.

69 Upon receipt of the request for a criminal history record information check, the State Police shall (a)
70 review its criminal history record information to determine if the buyer or transferee is prohibited from
71 possessing or transporting a firearm by state or federal law, (b) inform the dealer if its record indicates
72 that the buyer or transferee is so prohibited, and (c) provide the dealer with a unique reference number
73 for that inquiry.

74 2. The State Police shall provide its response to the requesting dealer during the dealer's request or
75 by return call without delay. A dealer who fulfills the requirements of subdivision 1 and is told by the
76 State Police that a response will not be available by the end of the dealer's fifth business day may
77 immediately complete the sale or transfer and shall not be deemed in violation of this section with
78 respect to such sale or transfer.

79 3. Except as required by subsection D of § 9.1-132, the State Police shall not maintain records longer
80 than 30 days, except for multiple handgun transactions for which records shall be maintained for 12
81 months, from any dealer's request for a criminal history record information check pertaining to a buyer
82 or transferee who is not found to be prohibited from possessing and transporting a firearm under state or
83 federal law. However, the log on requests made may be maintained for a period of 12 months, and such
84 log shall consist of the name of the purchaser, the dealer identification number, the unique approval
85 number, and the transaction date.

86 4. On the last day of the week following the sale or transfer of any firearm, the dealer shall mail or
87 deliver the written consent form required by subsection A to the Department of State Police. The State
88 Police shall immediately initiate a search of all available criminal history record information to
89 determine if the purchaser is prohibited from possessing or transporting a firearm under state or federal
90 law. If the search discloses information indicating that the buyer or transferee is so prohibited from
91 possessing or transporting a firearm, the State Police shall inform the chief law-enforcement officer in
92 the jurisdiction where the sale or transfer occurred and the dealer without delay.

93 5. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section, rifles and shotguns may be purchased by
94 persons who are citizens of the United States or persons lawfully admitted for permanent residence but
95 residents of other states under the terms of subsections A and B upon furnishing the dealer with one
96 photo-identification form issued by a governmental agency of the person's state of residence and one
97 other form of identification determined to be acceptable by the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

98 6. For the purposes of this subsection, the phrase "dealer's fifth business day" does not include
99 December 25.

100 C. No dealer shall sell, rent, trade, or transfer from his inventory any firearm, except when the
101 transaction involves a rifle or a shotgun and can be accomplished pursuant to the provisions of
102 subdivision B 5, to any person who is a dual resident of Virginia and another state pursuant to
103 applicable federal law unless he has first obtained from the Department of State Police a report
104 indicating that a search of all available criminal history record information has not disclosed that the
105 person is prohibited from possessing or transporting a firearm under state or federal law.

106 To establish personal identification and dual resident eligibility for purposes of this subsection, a
107 dealer shall require any prospective purchaser to present one photo-identification form issued by a
108 governmental agency of the prospective purchaser's state of legal residence and other documentation of
109 dual residence within the Commonwealth. The other documentation of dual residence in the
110 Commonwealth may include (i) evidence of currently paid personal property tax or real estate tax or a
111 current (a) lease, (b) utility or telephone bill, (c) voter registration card, (d) bank check, (e) passport, (f)
112 automobile registration, or (g) hunting or fishing license; (ii) other current identification allowed as
113 evidence of residency by 27 C.F.R. § 178.124 and ATF Ruling 2001-5; or (iii) other documentation of
114 residence determined to be acceptable by the Department of Criminal Justice Services and that
115 corroborates that the prospective purchaser currently resides in Virginia.

116 D. If any buyer or transferee is denied the right to purchase a firearm under this section, he may
117 exercise his right of access to and review and correction of criminal history record information under
118 § 9.1-132 or institute a civil action as provided in § 9.1-135, provided any such action is initiated within
119 30 days of such denial.

120 E. Any dealer who willfully and intentionally requests, obtains, or seeks to obtain criminal history

record information under false pretenses, or who willfully and intentionally disseminates or seeks to disseminate criminal history record information except as authorized in this section, ~~shall be~~ *is* guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor.

F. For purposes of this section:

"Actual buyer" means a person who executes the consent form required in subsection B or C, or other such firearm transaction records as may be required by federal law.

"Antique firearm" means:

1. Any firearm (including any firearm with a matchlock, flintlock, percussion cap, or similar type of ignition system) manufactured in or before 1898;

2. Any replica of any firearm described in subdivision 1 of this definition if such replica (i) is not designed or redesigned for using rimfire or conventional centerfire fixed ammunition or (ii) uses rimfire or conventional centerfire fixed ammunition that is no longer manufactured in the United States and that is not readily available in the ordinary channels of commercial trade;

3. Any muzzle-loading rifle, muzzle-loading shotgun, or muzzle-loading pistol that is designed to use black powder, or a black powder substitute, and that cannot use fixed ammunition. For purposes of this subdivision, the term "antique firearm" shall not include any weapon that incorporates a firearm frame or receiver, any firearm that is converted into a muzzle-loading weapon, or any muzzle-loading weapon that can be readily converted to fire fixed ammunition by replacing the barrel, bolt, breech-block, or any combination thereof; or

4. Any curio or relic as defined in this subsection.

"Assault firearm" means ~~any~~:

1. A semi-automatic ~~center-fire rifle or pistol which~~ *that* expels single or multiple projectiles by action of an explosion of a combustible material ~~and is equipped at the time of the offense with a magazine which will hold more than 20 fixed ammunition feeding device with the capacity to accept in excess of 15 rounds of ammunition or designed by the manufacturer to accommodate a silencer or equipped with a folding stock, except for an attached tubular device designed to accept, and capable of operating only with, .22 caliber rimfire ammunition;~~

2. A semi-automatic rifle ~~that has the capacity to accept a detachable ammunition feeding device and has one of the following characteristics:~~ *(i) a folding, telescoping, or detachable stock, or a stock that is otherwise foldable or adjustable in a manner that operates to reduce the length, size, or any other dimension, or otherwise enhances the concealability of the weapon; (ii) a pistol grip that protrudes conspicuously beneath the action of the rifle; (iii) a forward grip; (iv) a grenade launcher; (v) a threaded barrel capable of accepting a (a) silencer, (b) flash suppressor, (c) muzzle brake, or (d) muzzle compensator; (vi) a barrel shroud; or (vii) any characteristic of like kind as enumerated in clauses (i) through (vi);*

3. A semi-automatic pistol with a fixed ammunition feeding device that has the capacity to accept more than 15 rounds;

4. A semi-automatic pistol that expels single or multiple projectiles by action of an explosion of a combustible material that has an ammunition feeding device that is not a fixed ammunition feeding device and has one of the following characteristics: (i) a semi-automatic version of an automatic firearm; (ii) a second handgrip or protruding grip that can be held by the non-trigger hand; (iii) the capacity to accept an ammunition feeding device that attaches to the pistol outside of the pistol grip; (iv) a shroud that is attached to, or partially or completely encircles, the barrel and that permits the shooter to hold the pistol with the non-trigger hand without being burned; (v) a manufactured weight of 50 ounces or more when the pistol is unloaded; (vi) a threaded barrel capable of accepting a (a) silencer, (b) flash suppressor, (c) barrel extender, or (d) forward handgrip; (vii) a buffer tube, stabilizing brace, or similar component that protrudes horizontally behind the pistol grip and is designed or redesigned to allow or facilitate a firearm to be fired from the shoulder; or (viii) any characteristic of like kind as enumerated in clauses (i) through (vii);

5. A shotgun with a revolving cylinder that expels single or multiple projectiles by action of an explosion of a combustible material; or

6. A semi-automatic shotgun that expels single or multiple projectiles by action of an explosion of a combustible material that has the capacity to accept a detachable ammunition feeding device or a fixed ammunition feeding device that has the capacity to accept in excess of five rounds and has one of the following characteristics: (i) a folding, telescoping, or detachable stock; (ii) a forward grip; (iii) a pistol grip or bird's head grip; (iv) a grenade launcher; or (v) any characteristic of like kind as enumerated in clauses (i) through (iv).

"Assault firearm" includes any part or combination of parts designed or intended to convert, modify, or otherwise alter a firearm into an assault firearm or any combination of parts that may be readily assembled into an assault firearm.

"Curios or relics" means firearms that are of special interest to collectors by reason of some quality

182 other than is associated with firearms intended for sporting use or as offensive or defensive weapons. To
183 be recognized as curios or relics, firearms must fall within one of the following categories:

184 1. Firearms that were manufactured at least 50 years prior to the current date, which use rimfire or
185 conventional centerfire fixed ammunition that is no longer manufactured in the United States and that is
186 not readily available in the ordinary channels of commercial trade, but not including replicas thereof;

187 2. Firearms that are certified by the curator of a municipal, state, or federal museum that exhibits
188 firearms to be curios or relics of museum interest; and

189 3. Any other firearms that derive a substantial part of their monetary value from the fact that they
190 are novel, rare, bizarre, or because of their association with some historical figure, period, or event.
191 Proof of qualification of a particular firearm under this category may be established by evidence of
192 present value and evidence that like firearms are not available except as collectors' items, or that the
193 value of like firearms available in ordinary commercial channels is substantially less.

194 "Dealer" means any person licensed as a dealer pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 921 et seq.

195 "Firearm" means any handgun, shotgun, or rifle that will or is designed to or may readily be
196 converted to expel single or multiple projectiles by action of an explosion of a combustible material.

197 "Handgun" means any pistol or revolver or other firearm originally designed, made and intended to
198 fire single or multiple projectiles by means of an explosion of a combustible material from one or more
199 barrels when held in one hand.

200 "Lawfully admitted for permanent residence" means the status of having been lawfully accorded the
201 privilege of residing permanently in the United States as an immigrant in accordance with the
202 immigration laws, such status not having changed.

203 G. The Department of Criminal Justice Services shall promulgate regulations to ensure the identity,
204 confidentiality, and security of all records and data provided by the Department of State Police pursuant
205 to this section.

206 H. The provisions of this section shall not apply to (i) transactions between persons who are licensed
207 as firearms importers or collectors, manufacturers or dealers pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 921 et seq.; (ii)
208 purchases by or sales to any law-enforcement officer or agent of the United States, the Commonwealth
209 or any local government, or any campus police officer appointed under Article 3 (§ 23.1-809 et seq.) of
210 Chapter 8 of Title 23.1; or (iii) antique firearms or curios or relics.

211 I. The provisions of this section shall not apply to restrict purchase, trade, or transfer of firearms by
212 a resident of Virginia when the resident of Virginia makes such purchase, trade, or transfer in another
213 state, in which case the laws and regulations of that state and the United States governing the purchase,
214 trade, or transfer of firearms shall apply. A National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS)
215 check shall be performed prior to such purchase, trade, or transfer of firearms.

216 J. All licensed firearms dealers shall collect a fee of \$2 for every transaction for which a criminal
217 history record information check is required pursuant to this section, except that a fee of \$5 shall be
218 collected for every transaction involving an out-of-state resident. Such fee shall be transmitted to the
219 Department of State Police by the last day of the month following the sale for deposit in a special fund
220 for use by the State Police to offset the cost of conducting criminal history record information checks
221 under the provisions of this section.

222 K. Any person willfully and intentionally making a materially false statement on the consent form
223 required in subsection B or C or on such firearm transaction records as may be required by federal law
224 shall be is guilty of a Class 5 felony.

225 L. Except as provided in § 18.2-308.2:1, any dealer who willfully and intentionally sells, rents,
226 trades, or transfers a firearm in violation of this section shall be is guilty of a Class 6 felony.

227 L1. Any person who attempts to solicit, persuade, encourage, or entice any dealer to transfer or
228 otherwise convey a firearm other than to the actual buyer, as well as any other person who willfully and
229 intentionally aids or abets such person, shall be is guilty of a Class 6 felony. This subsection shall not
230 apply to a federal law-enforcement officer or a law-enforcement officer as defined in § 9.1-101, in the
231 performance of his official duties, or other person under his direct supervision.

232 M. Any person who purchases a firearm with the intent to (i) resell or otherwise provide such
233 firearm to any person who he knows or has reason to believe is ineligible to purchase or otherwise
234 receive from a dealer a firearm for whatever reason or (ii) transport such firearm out of the
235 Commonwealth to be resold or otherwise provided to another person who the transferor knows is
236 ineligible to purchase or otherwise receive a firearm, shall be is guilty of a Class 4 felony and sentenced
237 to a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of one year. However, if the violation of this subsection
238 involves such a transfer of more than one firearm, the person shall be sentenced to a mandatory
239 minimum term of imprisonment of five years. The prohibitions of this subsection shall not apply to the
240 purchase of a firearm by a person for the lawful use, possession, or transport thereof, pursuant to
241 § 18.2-308.7, by his child, grandchild, or individual for whom he is the legal guardian if such child,
242 grandchild, or individual is ineligible, solely because of his age, to purchase a firearm.

243 N. Any person who is ineligible to purchase or otherwise receive or possess a firearm in the

Commonwealth who solicits, employs, or assists any person in violating subsection M shall be is guilty of a Class 4 felony and shall be sentenced to a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of five years.

O. Any mandatory minimum sentence imposed under this section shall be served consecutively with any other sentence.

P. All driver's licenses issued on or after July 1, 1994, shall carry a letter designation indicating whether the driver's license is an original, duplicate, or renewed driver's license.

Q. Prior to selling, renting, trading, or transferring any firearm owned by the dealer but not in his inventory to any other person, a dealer may require such other person to consent to have the dealer obtain criminal history record information to determine if such other person is prohibited from possessing or transporting a firearm by state or federal law. The Department of State Police shall establish policies and procedures in accordance with 28 C.F.R. § 25.6 to permit such determinations to be made by the Department of State Police, and the processes established for making such determinations shall conform to the provisions of this section.

R. Except as provided in subdivisions 1 and 2, it shall be is unlawful for any person who is not a licensed firearms dealer to purchase more than one handgun within any 30-day period. For the purposes of this subsection, "purchase" does not include the exchange or replacement of a handgun by a seller for a handgun purchased from such seller by the same person seeking the exchange or replacement within the 30-day period immediately preceding the date of exchange or replacement. A violation of this subsection is punishable as a Class 1 misdemeanor.

1. Purchases in excess of one handgun within a 30-day period may be made upon completion of an enhanced background check, as described in this subsection, by special application to the Department of State Police listing the number and type of handguns to be purchased and transferred for lawful business or personal use, in a collector series, for collections, as a bulk purchase from estate sales, and for similar purposes. Such applications shall be signed under oath by the applicant on forms provided by the Department of State Police, shall state the purpose for the purchase above the limit, and shall require satisfactory proof of residency and identity. Such application shall be in addition to the firearms sales report required by the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The Superintendent of State Police shall promulgate regulations, pursuant to the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.), for the implementation of an application process for purchases of handguns above the limit.

Upon being satisfied that these requirements have been met, the Department of State Police shall immediately issue to the applicant a nontransferable certificate, which shall be valid for seven days from the date of issue. The certificate shall be surrendered to the dealer by the prospective purchaser prior to the consummation of such sale and shall be kept on file at the dealer's place of business for inspection as provided in § 54.1-4201 for a period of not less than two years. Upon request of any local law-enforcement agency, and pursuant to its regulations, the Department of State Police may certify such local law-enforcement agency to serve as its agent to receive applications and, upon authorization by the Department of State Police, issue certificates immediately pursuant to this subdivision. Applications and certificates issued under this subdivision shall be maintained as records as provided in subdivision B 3. The Department of State Police shall make available to local law-enforcement agencies all records concerning certificates issued pursuant to this subdivision and all records provided for in subdivision B 3.

2. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to:

- a. A law-enforcement agency;
- b. An agency duly authorized to perform law-enforcement duties;
- c. A state or local correctional facility;
- d. A private security company licensed to do business within the Commonwealth;
- e. The purchase of antique firearms;

f. A person whose handgun is stolen or irretrievably lost who deems it essential that such handgun be replaced immediately. Such person may purchase another handgun, even if the person has previously purchased a handgun within a 30-day period, provided that (i) the person provides the firearms dealer with a copy of the official police report or a summary thereof, on forms provided by the Department of State Police, from the law-enforcement agency that took the report of the lost or stolen handgun; (ii) the official police report or summary thereof contains the name and address of the handgun owner, a description of the handgun, the location of the loss or theft, the date of the loss or theft, and the date the loss or theft was reported to the law-enforcement agency; and (iii) the date of the loss or theft as reflected on the official police report or summary thereof occurred within 30 days of the person's attempt to replace the handgun. The firearms dealer shall attach a copy of the official police report or summary thereof to the original copy of the Virginia firearms transaction report completed for the transaction and retain it for the period prescribed by the Department of State Police;

- g. A person who trades in a handgun at the same time he makes a handgun purchase and as a part of

305 the same transaction, provided that no more than one transaction of this nature is completed per day;

306 h. A person who holds a valid Virginia permit to carry a concealed handgun;

307 i. A person who purchases a handgun in a private sale. For purposes of this subdivision, "private
308 sale" means a purchase from a person who makes occasional sales, exchanges, or purchases of firearms
309 for the enhancement of a personal collection of curios or relics or who sells all or part of such
310 collection of curios and relics; or

311 j. A law-enforcement officer. For purposes of this subdivision, "law-enforcement officer" means any
312 employee of a police department or sheriff's office that is part of or administered by the Commonwealth
313 or any political subdivision thereof and who is responsible for the prevention and detection of crime and
314 the enforcement of the penal, traffic, or highway laws of the Commonwealth.

315 *S. No person shall purchase an assault firearm from a dealer unless such person is 21 years of age*
316 *or older.*

317 *T. No dealer shall sell, rent, trade, or transfer from his inventory an assault firearm to any person*
318 *unless such person is 21 years of age or older.*

319 **2. That the provisions of this act may result in a net increase in periods of imprisonment or**
320 **commitment. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the**
321 **necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of imprisonment in state adult**
322 **correctional facilities; therefore, Chapter 1 of the Acts of Assembly of 2023, Special Session I,**
323 **requires the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission to assign a minimum fiscal impact of**
324 **\$50,000. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary**
325 **appropriation cannot be determined for periods of commitment to the custody of the Department**
326 **of Juvenile Justice.**