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HOUSE BILL NO. 1297

Offered January 10, 2024

Prefiled January 10, 2024

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 8 of Title 58.1 a section numbered 58.1-818, relating to recordation tax revenues; land protection and preservation.*

Patron—Krizek

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 8 of Title 58.1 a section numbered 58.1-818 as follows:

§ 58.1-818. Distribution of recordation tax for the protection and preservation of lands.

A. Beginning July 1, 2026, of the taxes imposed under §§ 58.1-801 through 58.1-809 that are actually paid into the state treasury, after distributions required by §§ 58.1-815.4 through 58.1-816.1, up to \$200 million of such amount shall be distributed as follows:

1. Fifteen percent to the Virginia Land Conservation Fund to be used in accordance with § 10.1-1020;

2. Fifteen percent to the Virginia Land Conservation Fund, established pursuant to § 10.1-1020, to be spent for the acquisition of land by the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Department of Wildlife Resources, and the Department of Forestry. Each year, such acquisition projects shall be agreed upon by the directors of those departments and submitted to the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation Board of Trustees for approval;

3. 2.5 percent to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, established pursuant to § 10.1-1800, to be spent for the purpose of providing grants to increase access to safe open space in Virginia's communities and prioritizing such grants to areas that are underserved;

4. 2.5 percent to the Virginia Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Historic Preservation Fund to be used in accordance with § 10.1-2202.5;

5. 2.5 percent to the Virginia Battlefield Preservation Fund to be used in accordance with § 10.1-2202.4;

6. 2.5 percent to the Virginia Farmland Preservation Fund to be used in accordance with § 3.2-201;

7. Thirty-five percent to the State Park Conservation Resources Fund to be used in accordance with § 10.1-202;

8. 12.5 percent to the Department of Conservation and Recreation to be used to establish a statewide system of trails as provided in § 10.1-204, with the assistance of the State Trails Advisory Committee as provided in § 10.1-204.1; and

9. 12.5 percent to the Virginia Department of Transportation for regional multi-use trails pursuant to the State Trails Plan, including new regional trails, projects to improve connectivity of existing trail networks, and geographic diversity in the use of such funds.

B. Such distribution amounts may be utilized for expenses in distributing such funds by the authorized official in the agency or entity overseeing receipt of such distribution only after approval from the cabinet secretary overseeing such agency or entity.

INTRODUCED

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