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SENATE BILL NO. 5

Offered January 10, 2024

Prefiled November 20, 2023

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 22.1 a chapter numbered 28, consisting of sections numbered 22.1-381 through 22.1-384, relating to Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics, and Computing (STEM+C) Competition Team Grant Program and Fund; established.*

Patrons—Stanley, Craig and Roem

Referred to Committee on Education and Health

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 22.1 a chapter numbered 28, consisting of sections numbered 22.1-381 through 22.1-384, as follows:

CHAPTER 28.

**SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MATHEMATICS, AND COMPUTING (STEM+C)
COMPETITION TEAM GRANT PROGRAM AND FUND.**

§ 22.1-381. Definitions.

As used in this chapter, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Fund" means the STEM+C Competition Team Grant Fund established in § 22.1-383.

"Qualified school" means a public elementary or secondary school in the Commonwealth at which at least 60 percent of students qualify for free or reduced price lunch.

"STEM+C" means science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and computing.

"Computing" means computer science, computational thinking, and computer coding.

"STEM+C competition team" means an extracurricular team-building activity that has a primary objective of engaging students in STEM+C-related activities and may include participating in project-based team competitions.

§ 22.1-382. STEM+C Competition Team Grant Program created; purpose.

The STEM+C Competition Team Grant Program is established to encourage interest in STEM+C-related subject areas and support STEM+C extracurricular team-building activities in public schools in the Commonwealth by providing grants to qualified schools for use in establishing or supporting STEM+C competition teams.

§ 22.1-383. STEM+C Competition Team Grant Fund established.

There is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting fund to be known as the STEM+C Competition Team Grant Fund. The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller. All funds as may be available from public or private sources shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the Fund. Interest earned on moneys in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any moneys remaining in the Fund, including interest thereon, at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Moneys in the Fund shall be used solely for the purpose of providing grants to qualified schools for use in establishing or supporting STEM+C competition teams. Expenditures and disbursements from the Fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Superintendent.

§ 22.1-384. Board to develop and issue grant guidelines; application; administration.

A. The Board shall develop and issue guidelines for the general requirements of qualifying for a grant from the Fund and shall develop the grant application form. Such guidelines shall be exempt from the provisions of the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.).

B. Beginning January 1, 2025, qualified schools may apply for a grant from the Fund. Grants from the Fund awarded to each qualified school shall not exceed \$10,000 per school year and shall be designated to establish or support STEM+C competition teams. Grants shall be issued in the order that each completed eligible application is received. In the event that the amount of eligible grants requested in a fiscal year exceeds the funds available in the Fund, such grants shall be paid in the next fiscal year in which funds are available.