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SENATE BILL NO. 469

Offered January 22, 1996

A BILL to amend and reenact § 63.1-85.4 of the Code of Virginia, relating to powers and duties of the Department for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing.

Patrons—Wampler, Couric, Gartlan, Goode, Houck, Lucas, Miller, Y.B. and Trumbo; Delegates: Albo, Christian, Darner, Forbes, Hargrove, Howell, Kilgore, Landes, Rhodes and Van Landingham

Referred to the Committee on General Laws

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That §63.1-85.4 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 63.1-85.4. Powers and duties of Department.

The Department shall have the following powers and duties:

1. To develop a program to inform the hearing impaired and the public of opportunities available for the hearing impaired to fulfill their needs and solve certain problems through existing state and local services and to make available such other information as would be of value to families, professionals and other citizens working or involved in the deafness field;

2. To promote a framework for consultation and cooperation among the state agencies and institutions serving the hearing impaired;

3. To aid in the provision of technical assistance and training within the Commonwealth in order to support efforts to initiate or improve programs and services for the hearing impaired;

4. To evaluate state programs which deliver services to the hearing impaired to determine their effectiveness and to make recommendations to the appropriate government officials concerning the future financial support and continuation of such programs and the establishment of the new ones;

5. To monitor state programs delivering services to the hearing impaired to determine the extent to which services promised or mandated are delivered;

6. To make appropriate recommendations for legislative changes to the Governor and General Assembly and to follow and evaluate federal legislation having a potential impact upon the hearing impaired of the Commonwealth;

7. To cooperate with schools for the deaf as provided in Chapter 19 (§ 22.1-346 et seq.) of Title 22.1 insofar as may be practicable;

8. To operate a program of ~~telecommunications~~ technology assistance and services to encourage independence of persons with hearing or speech impairments who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired, including the distribution of telecommunications devices for the deaf and support of message relay services, through grants, contracts and other means, including a sliding fee scale where appropriate; and

9. To make, adopt and promulgate such regulations, consistent with this chapter, as may be necessary to carry out the purpose and intent of this chapter and other laws of the Commonwealth administered by the Director or the Department. Such regulations shall be binding on all officers, agents, and employees engaged in implementing the provisions of this chapter.

INTRODUCED

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