

Conservation

HB 1836 – Natural Resources, Secretary of; changes name to the Secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources.

Patron: Plum

Summary: Renames the Secretary of Natural Resources as the Secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources. The bill also designates the Secretary as the Chief Resilience Officer and removes the Virginia Museum of Natural History from the purview of the Secretary.

Status: Continued to 2021 Sp. Sess. 1 in Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

PVA Position: SUPPORT

SB 1290 – ConserveVirginia program; established.

Patron: Mason

Summary: Establishes in the Department of Conservation and Recreation a data-driven Geographical Information Systems model to prioritize potential conservation areas across the Commonwealth that would provide quantifiable benefits to the citizens of Virginia, known as ConserveVirginia. Aspects of the program include (i) the synthesis of multiple mapped data inputs, divided into categories, each representing a different overarching conservation value, and periodic revision of such values; (ii) access to the model by the public and all state and federal agencies; and (iii) incorporation of the model into acquisition or grant decisions when appropriate. The bill requires the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation to report on the success of the program and incorporate the program into needs assessments for expenditures from the Virginia Land Conservation Fund.

Status: Continued to 2021 Sp. Sess. 1 in Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources

PVA Position: SUPPORT

Conservation Easements

HB 1760 – Conservation easements; certain easements be liberally construed in favor of purpose which created.

Patron: Webert

Summary: Provides that an easement held pursuant to the Virginia Conservation Easement Act or the Open-Space Land Act or by the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation be liberally construed in favor of achieving the conservation purposes for which it was created.

Status: Continued to 2021 Sp. Sess. 1 in Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

PVA Position: SUPPORT

SB 1199 – Conservation easements; construction.

Patron: Petersen

Summary: Provides that an easement held pursuant to the Virginia Conservation Easement Act or the Open-Space Land Act be liberally construed in favor of achieving the conservation purposes for which it was created.

Status: Continued to 2021 Sp. Sess. 1 in Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources

PVA Position: SUPPORT

Derelict Properties

HB 1969 – Administration of blighted and derelict properties; modifies definition of “qualifying locality.”

Patron: Carr

Summary: Modifies the definition of “qualifying locality” to include any locality with a score of 100 or higher on the fiscal stress index, as published by the Department of Housing and Community

Development in July 2020. Under current law, a qualifying locality is one with a score of 107 or higher on the fiscal stress index, as published by the Department using revised data for 2017. Qualifying localities are able to (i) classify blighted and derelict properties as a separate class of taxable property and assess such property at a higher rate and (ii) sell delinquent tax lands six months after the locality has incurred abatement costs for buildings that have been condemned, constitute a nuisance, are a derelict building, or are declared to be blighted. The bill adds qualifying localities to the list of localities that have different requirements for having a special commissioner appointed to convey tax-delinquent real estate to the locality in lieu of a public sale at auction.

Status: Continued to 2021 Sp. Sess. 1 in Finance and Appropriations

SB 1285 – Vacant buildings; registration.

Patron: Locke

Summary: Removes the requirement that a building meet the definition of “derelict building” in order for the Town of Clifton Forge, the Town of Pulaski, in a conservation and rehabilitation district of the town, the Town of Timberville, and any city to require, by ordinance, the owner or owners of buildings that have been vacant for a continuous period of 12 months or more to register such buildings on an annual basis and pay an annual registration fee not to exceed \$100 to defray the cost of processing such registration.

Status: Continued to 2021 Sp. Sess. 1 in Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns

Educational Programs

HB 1980 – Enslaved Ancestors College Access Scholarship Program; established, report.

Patron: Reid

Summary: Establishes the Enslaved Ancestors College Access Scholarship Program, whereby Longwood University, the University of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, the Virginia Military

Institute, and The College of William and Mary in Virginia are required to annually provide, starting in the 2022-2023 academic year and with any source of funds other than state funds or tuition or fee increases, to at least one African American Virginia student who was born in the Commonwealth and has a total household income that is not more than 400 percent of the federal poverty guidelines a renewable scholarship in an amount sufficient to cover tuition, mandatory fees, room and board, books and other educational supplies, and tutoring at the institution. The bill requires the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to collaborate with such institutions to establish guidelines for the implementation of the Program and to annually collect information on the implementation of the Program from such institutions and report such information to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Appropriations, the House Committee on Education, the Senate Committee on Education and Health, the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations, and the Virginia African American Advisory Board.

Status: Continued to 2021 Sp. Sess. 1 in Education and Health

Historic Preservation and Resources

HB 1928 – Historic resources; acquisition and lease of land.

Patron: Aird

Summary: Exempts additional land acquisition activities of the Department of Historic Resources (the Department) and the Board of Historic Resources (the Board) from review by the Department of General Services and authorizes the Department and Board to undertake additional leasing and property acquisition activities related to battlefield properties, designated landmarks, and other properties of historic significance.

Status: Continued to 2021 Sp. Sess. 1 in Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

PVA Position: SUPPORT

HB 2311 – Objects of antiquity; removal from battlefield; penalty.

Patron: Runion

Summary: Adds land owned by a battlefield preservation organization and land on which such organization holds an easement to the category of lands on which it is unlawful to intentionally damage, disturb, or remove any object of antiquity. Current law prohibits such acts on any designated state archaeological site or on state-controlled land and provides that a violation of the prohibition is a Class 1 misdemeanor.

Status: Continued to 2021 Sp. Sess. 1 in Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

SB 1172 – Capitol Square Preservation Council; powers and duties, review and approval of plans for changes.

Patron: Norment

Summary: Grants the Capitol Square Preservation Council the authority to review and approve all plans or proposals for alterations, improvements, additions, or renovations to, or other disposition of, any monuments, statuary, artwork, or other historical artifacts contained within the Capitol Building, including within the old and new Senate chambers, the old and new halls of the House of Delegates, and the Rotunda.

Status: Continued to 2021 Sp. Sess. 1 in Committee on Rules

SB 1186 – Landfill siting; historic preservation.

Patron: Hashmi

Summary: Prohibits the construction of any new municipal solid waste landfill within three miles of any designated historic district, building, structure, object, or site.

Status: Passed by indefinitely in Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

PVA Status: SUPPORT

SB 1457 – Preservation of historic sites.

Patron: Surovell

Summary: Provides that any locality utilizing the urban county executive form of government (Fairfax County) may include a provision in its historic preservation ordinance requiring public access to an historic area, landmark, building, or structure, or land pertaining thereto, or providing that no subdivision shall occur within any historic district unless approved by the review board or, on appeal, by the governing body of the locality as being compatible with the historic nature of such area, landmarks, buildings, or structures therein with regard to any parcel or parcels that collectively are (i) adjacent to a navigable river and a national park, (ii) owned by a common owner exempt from taxation, and (iii) in part or as a whole subject to an easement granted to the National Park Service or Virginia Outdoors Foundation granted on or after January 1, 1973.

Status: Continued to 2021 Sp. Sess. 1 Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns

Monuments and Memorials

HB 1781 – Intentional injury to property or a monument or memorial; reduces penalty.

Patron: Carter

Summary: Reduces from a Class 6 felony to a Class 1 misdemeanor the penalty for damages of \$1,000 or more for the crime of intentional injury or destruction of (i) any property, real or personal, not his own or (ii) a monument or memorial for war veterans, a monument erected to mark the site of an engagement fought during the Civil War, or a memorial to designate the boundary of a city, town, or tract of land.

Status: Left in Courts of Justice

Budget Items

Governor's Priority Budget Items

Governor Northam recently outlined his biennial budget proposal which includes spending \$25 million to help transform historical sites in Virginia, including Richmond's former slave-trading district, Shockoe Bottom. He also announced plans to remove a statue of segregationist Harry Byrd, a former Virginia governor and U.S. Senator, from Capitol Square.

In addition to the Governor's introduced budget amendments, the House and Senate have respectively proposed the following amendments to the budget bill:

House

Item 97 #2h – Farmland Preservation Fund – This amendment provides an additional \$2.0 million the second year from the general fund to the Virginia Farmland Preservation Fund.

Item 385 #1h – Loudoun Freedom Center – This amendment provides \$255,000 the second year from the general fund for the County of Loudoun to provide support to the Loudoun Freedom Center for its activities related to the African American Museum and History Education.

Item 385 #2h – Underwater Archaeology Program – This amendment restores \$159,479 the second year from the general fund for the Department of Historic Resources to establish an underwater archaeology program.

Item 385 #3h – Museum and Cultural Attraction Study – This amendment provides \$100,000 from the general fund the first year for the Town of Christiansburg to assist The Christiansburg Institute in assessing the feasibility of establishing a museum and cultural attraction facility commemorating The Christiansburg Industrial Institute, which was the first high African American high school in Southwest Virginia.

Item 385 #4h – Weston Manor – This amendment provides \$100,000 from the general fund the second year for the City of Hopewell to support improvements at Weston Manor.

Item 385 #5h – Historic African American Schools Preservation Fund – This amendment provides \$10.0 million from the general fund the second year to establish the Historic African American Schools Preservation Fund.

Item 385 #6h – Carver Price Legacy Museum – This amendment provides \$570,000 from the general fund the second year to Appomattox County for renovations at the Carver Price Legacy Museum.

Item 385 #7h – Stanton Family Cemetery – This amendment increases the support for care of historical African American graves at Stanton Family Cemetery in Buckingham County.

Senate

Item 385 #1s – Arlington Historical Society – This amendment provides a one-time appropriation of \$120,000 for capital and structural improvements and to preserve artifacts for the Arlington Historical Society's Hume School, an 1800's schoolhouse that is now Arlington County's museum, in order to make the facility ADA-accessible and sustainable for the future.

Item 385 #3s – Underwater Archaeology – This amendment funds one full-time underwater archaeologist and one part-time archaeologist to assess the effects of state projects on 1,142,000 acres of submerged state lands. This funding was approved during the 2020 Session and subsequently unallotted.

Item 385 #4s – River Farm – This amendment provides for the one-time appropriation of \$2.0 million GF for a grant to the County of Fairfax for the preservation of River Farm. Leveraged with federal and private funds, this support from the Commonwealth would help assure that this historic property on the Potomac will be open to the public for

generations to come. This funding to the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, a subdivision of the Commonwealth, will support a purchase option proposed jointly by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority and the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust. Extensive research on the natural and historic features of this property, in addition to recent appraisal, support this effort.

Item 385 #5s – Historic Property Catalogue – This amendment provides \$250,000 to the Department of Historic Resources for the expansion of Virginia’s historical property catalog to include underrepresented African American and indigenous communities. Included in these amounts is \$110,000 to support one new FTE, \$100,000 for a grant program to provide paid internships in partnership with Virginia’s HBCU’s and to conduct fieldwork, and \$40,000 for cultural data enrichments and database enhancements for the Virginia Cultural Resources Information System.

Item 385 #6s – Hopewell Manor – This amendment \$100,000 GF the second year for the City of Hopewell to support improvements at Weston Manor.

Item 386 #1s – Restore Unallotted Funding – This amendment restores operational and administrative support at the Department of Historic Resources that was approved during the 2020 Session, but subsequently unallotted. Included within this amount is funding for in-band compensation adjustments for a variety of professional staff as recommended by the Department of Human Resources.

Budget Amendments Included in Committee Reports: House

Farmland Preservation Fund – This amendment provides an additional \$1.0 million the second year from the general fund to the Virginia Farmland Preservation Fund.

Underwater Archaeology Program – This amendment restores \$159,479 the second year from the general fund for the Department of Historic Resources to establish an underwater archaeology program.

Loudoun Freedom Center – This amendment provides \$255,000 the second year from the general fund for the County of Loudoun to provide support to the Loudoun Freedom Center for its activities related to the African American Museum and History Education.

Carver Price Legacy Museum – This amendment provides \$570,000 from the general fund the second year to Appomattox County for renovations at the Carver Price Legacy Museum.

River Farm – This amendment provides \$2,000,000 from the general fund to the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority to purchase River Farm in the City of Alexandria.

Senate

Historic Property Catalogue – This amendment provides \$250,000 to the Department of Historic Resources for the expansion of Virginia's historical property catalog to include underrepresented African American and indigenous communities. Included in these amounts is \$110,000 to support one new FTE, \$100,000 for a grant program to provide paid internships in partnership with Virginia's HBCU's and to conduct fieldwork, and \$40,000 for cultural data enrichments and database enhancements for the Virginia Cultural Resources Information System.

Restore Base Operating – This amendment restores operational and administrative support at the Department of Historic Resources that was approved during the 2020 Session, but subsequently unallotted. Included within this amount is funding for in-band compensation adjustments for a variety of professional staff as recommended by the Department of Human Resources.

River Farms – This amendment earmarks \$5M from the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation for a project focused on preservation of tribal land of the Chickahominy Tribe and for preservation of River Farm in Alexandria.

Historic Preservation and Resources

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