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HOUSE BILL NO. 357
Offered January 10, 2024
Prefiled January 6, 2024

A BILL to direct the Department of Environmental Quality to establish a work group to develop strategies to protect existing tidal and nontidal wetlands of the Commonwealth and plans for wetland restoration and creation to address impacts from human activities and climate change; report.

Patrons—Simonds and Bulova

Referred to Committee on Rules

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. *That the Department of Environmental Quality shall convene a work group to develop (i) strategies to protect the existing tidal and nontidal wetlands of the Commonwealth and (ii) plans for wetland restoration and creation to address losses and adverse impacts from human activities and climate change. Such work group shall include relevant representatives of nonprofit organizations, academic institutions such as the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, local governments or regional planning commissions, and state agencies such as the Department of Wildlife Resources, Marine Resources Commission, and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. In completing its work, the work group shall (a) evaluate existing approaches to wetland conservation strategies in the Commonwealth and other states, (b) identify wetlands adaptation areas where tidal wetlands can persist in the landscape, and (c) explore the circumstances in which climate can impact the wetlands' health and survival. The work group shall report its findings and recommendations to the Chairs of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources and House Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources by December 1, 2024.*

INTRODUCED

HB357