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SENATE BILL NO. 832

Offered January 8, 2025

Prefiled December 31, 2024

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 8 of Title 36 a section numbered 36-140.02, relating to Department of Housing and Community Development; rental assistance voucher pilot program.

Patrons—Locke and Pillion

Referred to Committee on General Laws and Technology

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 8 of Title 36 a section numbered 36-140.02 as follows:

§ 36-140.02. Rental assistance voucher pilot program.

A. For the purposes of this section, "qualifying household" means a family unit that resides together in one dwelling (i) that includes at least one person 16 years of age or younger and (ii) whose income does not exceed 50 percent of the area median income for the locality in which such family resides, as calculated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

B. The Department shall establish and administer a pilot program to provide direct rental assistance to qualifying households in the form of a rental assistance voucher. Qualifying households may receive a rental assistance voucher equal to the lesser of (i) the amount necessary to reduce their housing costs to 30 percent of the monthly adjusted net income of the household or (ii) the applicable voucher payment standard as determined by the Department. Rental assistance vouchers issued pursuant to this section may be used for housing in any locality in the state.

C. The Department shall establish regulations and guidelines for the administration of the pilot program informed by the 2022 Virginia Housing Stability Fund Model Program Guidelines report. The Department may administer the pilot program in partnership with local and regional agencies. The Department shall determine voucher payment standards for each size of a dwelling unit in a market area, which shall be greater than or equal to the Small Area Fair Market Rent, as established annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, for the same size of dwelling unit in the same market area. Each dwelling unit for which a rental assistance voucher is used shall comply with applicable state and local health, housing, building, and safety codes.

D. The Department shall collect data on the utilization of the rental assistance vouchers issued in each fiscal year under the pilot program and submit an annual report to the General Assembly on or before December 1 of each year with an update on the implementation and impact of the pilot program.

2. That the provisions of this section shall expire on July 1, 2028.

INTRODUCED

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