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HOUSE BILL NO. 1623

Offered January 13, 2025

Prefiled January 3, 2025

A BILL to amend and reenact § 55.1-1260 of the Code of Virginia and to repeal the fourth enactment of Chapter 355 and the fourth enactment of Chapter 356 of the Acts of Assembly of 2019, as amended by Chapter 797 of the Acts of Assembly of 2022 and Chapters 32 and 42 of the Acts of Assembly of 2024, relating to Eviction Diversion Pilot Program; name change; general application; expiration repealed.

Patrons—McClure, Bennett-Parker, Clark, Cole, Cousins, Glass, Henson, Herring, Jones, LeVere Bolling, Martinez, Mundon King, Price and Rasoul

Referred to Committee on General Laws

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 55.1-1260 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:****Article 7.****Eviction Diversion Pilot Program.****§ 55.1-1260. Establishment of Eviction Diversion Program; purpose; goals.**

A. There is hereby established the Eviction Diversion Pilot Program (the Program) within the existing structure of the general district courts ~~for the cities of Danville, Hampton, Petersburg, and Richmond of the Commonwealth.~~ The purpose of the Program shall be to reduce the number of evictions of low-income persons. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no eviction diversion court or program shall be established except in conformance with this section.

B. The goals of the Program shall include (i) reducing the number of evictions of low-income persons from their residential dwelling units for the failure to pay small amounts of money under the rental agreement, in particular when such persons have experienced an event that adversely affected financial circumstances such as the loss of employment or a medical crisis in their immediate family; (ii) reducing displacement of families from their homes and the resulting adverse consequences to children who are no longer able to remain in the same public school after eviction; (iii) encouraging understanding of eviction-related processes and facilitating the landlord's and tenant's entering into a reasonable payment plan that provides for the landlord to receive full rental payments as contracted for in the rental agreement and for the tenant to have the opportunity to make current such rental payments; and (iv) encouraging tenants to make rental payments in the manner as provided in the rental agreement.

2. That the fourth enactment of Chapter 355 and the fourth enactment of Chapter 356 of the Acts of Assembly of 2019, as amended by Chapter 797 of the Acts of Assembly of 2022 and Chapters 32 and 42 of the Acts of Assembly of 2024, are repealed.

INTRODUCED

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