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HOUSE BILL NO. 1955

Offered January 13, 2025

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A BILL to amend and reenact § 18.2-248 of the Code of Virginia, relating to manufacturing, selling, giving, distributing, or possessing with intent to manufacture, sell, give, or distribute a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance prohibited; penalties.

Patrons—Gardner, Convirs-Fowler, Hope, Keys-Gamarra and Martinez

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 18.2-248 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 18.2-248. Manufacturing, selling, giving, distributing, or possessing with intent to manufacture, sell, give, or distribute a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance prohibited; penalties.

A. Except as authorized in the Drug Control Act (§ 54.1-3400 et seq.), it shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, sell, give, distribute, or possess with intent to manufacture, sell, give or distribute a controlled substance or an imitation controlled substance.

B. In determining whether any person intends to manufacture, sell, give or distribute an imitation controlled substance, the court may consider, in addition to all other relevant evidence, whether any distribution or attempted distribution of such pill, capsule, tablet or substance in any other form whatsoever included an exchange of or a demand for money or other property as consideration, and, if so, whether the amount of such consideration was substantially greater than the reasonable value of such pill, capsule, tablet or substance in any other form whatsoever, considering the actual chemical composition of such pill, capsule, tablet or substance in any other form whatsoever and, where applicable, the price at which over-the-counter substances of like chemical composition sell.

C. Except as provided in subsection C1, any person who violates this section with respect to a controlled substance classified in Schedule I or II shall upon conviction be imprisoned for not less than five nor more than 40 years and fined not more than \$500,000. Upon a second conviction of such a violation, and it is alleged in the warrant, indictment, or information that the person has been before convicted of such an offense or of a substantially similar offense in any other jurisdiction, which offense would be a felony if committed in the Commonwealth, and such prior conviction occurred before the date of the offense alleged in the warrant, indictment, or information, any such person may, in the discretion of the court or jury imposing the sentence, be sentenced to imprisonment for life or for any period not less than five years, three years of which shall be a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment to be served consecutively with any other sentence, and he shall be fined not more than \$500,000.

When a person is convicted of a third or subsequent offense under this subsection and it is alleged in the warrant, indictment or information that he has been before convicted of two or more such offenses or of substantially similar offenses in any other jurisdiction which offenses would be felonies if committed in the Commonwealth and such prior convictions occurred before the date of the offense alleged in the warrant, indictment, or information, he shall be sentenced to imprisonment for life or for a period of not less than 10 years, 10 years of which shall be a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment to be served consecutively with any other sentence, and he shall be fined not more than \$500,000.

Any person who manufactures, sells, gives, distributes or possesses with the intent to manufacture, sell, give, or distribute the following is guilty of a felony punishable by a fine of not more than \$1 million and imprisonment for five years to life, five years of which shall be a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment to be served consecutively with any other sentence:

1. 100 grams or more of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of heroin;
2. 500 grams or more of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of:
 - a. Coca leaves, except coca leaves and extracts of coca leaves from which cocaine, ecgonine, and derivatives of ecgonine or their salts have been removed;
 - b. Cocaine, its salts, optical and geometric isomers, and salts of isomers;
 - c. *Cocaine base*;
 - d. Ecgonine, its derivatives, their salts, isomers, and salts of isomers; or
 - ~~e. Any compound, mixture, or preparation that contains any quantity of any of the substances referred to in subdivisions 2a through 2e 2d; or~~
3. ~~250 grams or more of a mixture or substance described in subdivisions 2a through 2d that contain cocaine base; or~~

59 4. 10 grams or more of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers, or salts of its isomers or 20 grams or more of
60 a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers, or salts of its
61 isomers.

62 The mandatory minimum term of imprisonment to be imposed for a violation of this subsection shall not
63 be applicable if the court finds that:

64 a. The person does not have a prior conviction for an offense listed in subsection C of § 17.1-805;

65 b. The person did not use violence or credible threats of violence or possess a firearm or other dangerous
66 weapon in connection with the offense or induce another participant in the offense to do so;

67 c. The offense did not result in death or serious bodily injury to any person;

68 d. The person was not an organizer, leader, manager, or supervisor of others in the offense, and was not
69 engaged in a continuing criminal enterprise as defined in subsection I; and

70 e. Not later than the time of the sentencing hearing, the person has truthfully provided to the
71 Commonwealth all information and evidence the person has concerning the offense or offenses that were part
72 of the same course of conduct or of a common scheme or plan, but the fact that the person has no relevant or
73 useful other information to provide or that the Commonwealth already is aware of the information shall not
74 preclude a determination by the court that the defendant has complied with this requirement.

75 C1. Any person who violates this section with respect to the manufacturing of methamphetamine, its salts,
76 isomers, or salts of its isomers or less than 200 grams of a mixture or substance containing a detectable
77 amount of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers, or salts of its isomers shall, upon conviction, be imprisoned
78 for not less than 10 nor more than 40 years and fined not more than \$500,000. Upon a second conviction of
79 such a violation, any such person may, in the discretion of the court or jury imposing the sentence, be
80 sentenced to imprisonment for life or for any period not less than 10 years, and be fined not more than
81 \$500,000. When a person is convicted of a third or subsequent offense under this subsection and it is alleged
82 in the warrant, indictment, or information that he has been previously convicted of two or more such offenses
83 or of substantially similar offenses in any other jurisdiction, which offenses would be felonies if committed in
84 the Commonwealth and such prior convictions occurred before the date of the offense alleged in the warrant,
85 indictment, or information, he shall be sentenced to imprisonment for life or for a period not less than 10
86 years, three years of which shall be a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment to be served consecutively
87 with any other sentence and he shall be fined not more than \$500,000.

88 Upon conviction, in addition to any other punishment, a person found guilty of this offense shall be
89 ordered by the court to make restitution, as the court deems appropriate, to any innocent property owner
90 whose property is damaged, destroyed, or otherwise rendered unusable as a result of such methamphetamine
91 production. This restitution shall include the person's or his estate's estimated or actual expenses associated
92 with cleanup, removal, or repair of the affected property. If the property that is damaged, destroyed, or
93 otherwise rendered unusable as a result of such methamphetamine production is property owned in whole or
94 in part by the person convicted, the court shall order the person to pay to the Methamphetamine Cleanup
95 Fund authorized in § 18.2-248.04 the reasonable estimated or actual expenses associated with cleanup,
96 removal, or repair of the affected property or, if actual or estimated expenses cannot be determined, the sum
97 of \$10,000. The convicted person shall also pay the cost of certifying that any building that is cleaned up or
98 repaired pursuant to this section is safe for human occupancy according to the guidelines established pursuant
99 to § 32.1-11.7.

100 D. If such person proves that he gave, distributed or possessed with intent to give or distribute a controlled
101 substance classified in Schedule I or II only as an accommodation to another individual who is not an inmate
102 in a community correctional facility, local correctional facility or state correctional facility as defined in §
103 53.1-1 or in the custody of an employee thereof, and not with intent to profit thereby from any consideration
104 received or expected nor to induce the recipient or intended recipient of the controlled substance to use or
105 become addicted to or dependent upon such controlled substance, he shall be guilty of a Class 5 felony.

106 E. If the violation of the provisions of this article consists of the filling by a pharmacist of the prescription
107 of a person authorized under this article to issue the same, which prescription has not been received in writing
108 by the pharmacist prior to the filling thereof, and such written prescription is in fact received by the
109 pharmacist within one week of the time of filling the same, or if such violation consists of a request by such
110 authorized person for the filling by a pharmacist of a prescription which has not been received in writing by
111 the pharmacist and such prescription is, in fact, written at the time of such request and delivered to the
112 pharmacist within one week thereof, either such offense shall constitute a Class 4 misdemeanor.

113 E1. Any person who violates this section with respect to a controlled substance classified in Schedule III
114 except for an anabolic steroid classified in Schedule III, constituting a violation of § 18.2-248.5, shall be
115 guilty of a Class 5 felony.

116 E2. Any person who violates this section with respect to a controlled substance classified in Schedule IV
117 shall be guilty of a Class 6 felony.

118 E3. Any person who proves that he gave, distributed or possessed with the intent to give or distribute a
119 controlled substance classified in Schedule III or IV, except for an anabolic steroid classified in Schedule III,

constituting a violation of § 18.2-248.5, only as an accommodation to another individual who is not an inmate in a community correctional facility, local correctional facility or state correctional facility as defined in § 53.1-1 or in the custody of an employee thereof, and not with the intent to profit thereby from any consideration received or expected nor to induce the recipient or intended recipient of the controlled substance to use or become addicted to or dependent upon such controlled substance, is guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

F. Any person who violates this section with respect to a controlled substance classified in Schedule V or Schedule VI or an imitation controlled substance which imitates a controlled substance classified in Schedule V or Schedule VI, shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

G. Any person who violates this section with respect to an imitation controlled substance which imitates a controlled substance classified in Schedule I, II, III, or IV shall be guilty of a Class 6 felony. In any prosecution brought under this subsection, it is not a defense to a violation of this subsection that the defendant believed the imitation controlled substance to actually be a controlled substance.

H. Any person who manufactures, sells, gives, distributes or possesses with the intent to manufacture, sell, give or distribute the following:

1. 1.0 kilograms or more of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of heroin;
2. 5.0 kilograms or more of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of:
 - a. Coca leaves, except coca leaves and extracts of coca leaves from which cocaine, ecgonine, and derivatives of ecgonine or their salts have been removed;
 - b. Cocaine, its salts, optical and geometric isomers, and salts of isomers;
 - c. *Cocaine base*;
 - d. Ecgonine, its derivatives, their salts, isomers, and salts of isomers; or
 - ~~e.~~ *e.* Any compound, mixture, or preparation which contains any quantity of any of the substances referred to in subdivisions a through d;

~~3. 2.5 kilograms or more of a mixture or substance described in subdivision 2 which contains cocaine base;~~

4. 100 kilograms or more of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of marijuana; or
~~5. 4. 100 grams or more of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers, or salts of its isomers or 200 grams or more of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers, or salts of its isomers shall be guilty of a felony punishable by a fine of not more than \$1 million and imprisonment for 20 years to life, 20 years of which shall be a mandatory minimum sentence. Such mandatory minimum sentence shall not be applicable if the court finds that (i) the person does not have a prior conviction for an offense listed in subsection C of § 17.1-805; (ii) the person did not use violence or credible threats of violence or possess a firearm or other dangerous weapon in connection with the offense or induce another participant in the offense to do so; (iii) the offense did not result in death or serious bodily injury to any person; (iv) the person was not an organizer, leader, manager, or supervisor of others in the offense, and was not engaged in a continuing criminal enterprise as defined in subsection I of this section; and (v) not later than the time of the sentencing hearing, the person has truthfully provided to the Commonwealth all information and evidence the person has concerning the offense or offenses that were part of the same course of conduct or of a common scheme or plan, but the fact that the person has no relevant or useful other information to provide or that the Commonwealth already is aware of the information shall not preclude a determination by the court that the defendant has complied with this requirement.~~

H1. Any person who was the principal or one of several principal administrators, organizers or leaders of a continuing criminal enterprise shall be guilty of a felony if (i) the enterprise received at least \$100,000 but less than \$250,000 in gross receipts during any 12-month period of its existence from the manufacture, importation, or distribution of heroin or cocaine or ecgonine or methamphetamine or the derivatives, salts, isomers, or salts of isomers thereof or marijuana or (ii) the person engaged in the enterprise to manufacture, sell, give, distribute or possess with the intent to manufacture, sell, give or distribute the following during any 12-month period of its existence:

1. At least 1.0 kilograms but less than 5.0 kilograms of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of heroin;
2. At least 5.0 kilograms but less than 10 kilograms of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of:
 - a. Coca leaves, except coca leaves and extracts of coca leaves from which cocaine, ecgonine, and derivatives of ecgonine or their salts have been removed;
 - b. Cocaine, its salts, optical and geometric isomers, and salts of isomers;
 - c. *Cocaine base*;
 - d. Ecgonine, its derivatives, their salts, isomers, and salts of isomers; or
 - ~~e.~~ *e.* Any compound, mixture, or preparation which contains any quantity of any of the substances referred to in subdivisions a through d;
3. ~~At least 2.5 kilograms but less than 5.0 kilograms of a mixture or substance described in subdivision 2~~

181 ~~which contains cocaine base;~~

182 4. At least 100 kilograms but less than 250 kilograms of a mixture or substance containing a detectable
183 amount of marijuana; or

184 ~~5.~~ 4. At least 100 grams but less than 250 grams of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers, or salts of its
185 isomers or at least 200 grams but less than 1.0 kilograms of a mixture or substance containing a detectable
186 amount of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers, or salts of its isomers.

187 A conviction under this section shall be punishable by a fine of not more than \$1 million and
188 imprisonment for 20 years to life, 20 years of which shall be a mandatory minimum sentence.

189 H2. Any person who was the principal or one of several principal administrators, organizers or leaders of
190 a continuing criminal enterprise if (i) the enterprise received \$250,000 or more in gross receipts during any
191 12-month period of its existence from the manufacture, importation, or distribution of heroin or cocaine or
192 ecgonine or methamphetamine or the derivatives, salts, isomers, or salts of isomers thereof or marijuana or
193 (ii) the person engaged in the enterprise to manufacture, sell, give, distribute or possess with the intent to
194 manufacture, sell, give or distribute the following during any 12-month period of its existence:

195 1. At least 5.0 kilograms of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of heroin;

196 2. At least 10 kilograms of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of:

197 a. Coca leaves, except coca leaves and extracts of coca leaves from which cocaine, ecgonine, and
198 derivatives of ecgonine or their salts have been removed;

199 b. Cocaine, its salts, optical and geometric isomers, and salts of isomers;

200 c. *Cocaine base*;

201 d. Ecgonine, its derivatives, their salts, isomers, and salts of isomers; or

202 ~~d.~~ e. Any compound, mixture, or preparation which contains any quantity of any of the substances referred
203 to in subdivisions a through e d;

204 3. ~~At least 5.0 kilograms of a mixture or substance described in subdivision 2 which contains cocaine~~
205 ~~base;~~

206 4. At least 250 kilograms of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of marijuana; or

207 ~~5.~~ 4. At least 250 grams of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers, or salts of its isomers or at least 1.0
208 kilograms of a mixture or substance containing a detectable amount of methamphetamine, its salts, isomers,
209 or salts of its isomers shall be guilty of a felony punishable by a fine of not more than \$1 million and
210 imprisonment for life, which shall be served with no suspension in whole or in part. Such punishment shall be
211 made to run consecutively with any other sentence. However, the court may impose a mandatory minimum
212 sentence of 40 years if the court finds that the defendant substantially cooperated with law-enforcement
213 authorities.

214 I. For purposes of this section, a person is engaged in a continuing criminal enterprise if (i) he violates any
215 provision of this section, the punishment for which is a felony and either (ii) such violation is a part of a
216 continuing series of violations of this section which are undertaken by such person in concert with five or
217 more other persons with respect to whom such person occupies a position of organizer, a supervisory
218 position, or any other position of management, and from which such person obtains substantial income or
219 resources or (iii) such violation is committed, with respect to methamphetamine or other controlled substance
220 classified in Schedule I or II, for the benefit of, at the direction of, or in association with any criminal street
221 gang as defined in § 18.2-46.1.

222 J. Except as authorized in the Drug Control Act (§ 54.1-3400 et seq.), any person who possesses any two
223 or more different substances listed below with the intent to manufacture methamphetamine, methcathinone,
224 or amphetamine is guilty of a Class 6 felony: liquefied ammonia gas, ammonium nitrate, ether,
225 hypophosphorus acid solutions, hypophosphite salts, hydrochloric acid, iodine crystals or tincture of iodine,
226 phenylacetone, phenylacetic acid, red phosphorus, methylamine, methyl formamide, lithium, sodium metal,
227 sulfuric acid, sodium hydroxide, potassium dichromate, sodium dichromate, potassium permanganate,
228 chromium trioxide, methylbenzene, methamphetamine precursor drugs, trichloroethane, or 2-propanone.

229 K. The term "methamphetamine precursor drug," when used in this article, means a drug or product
230 containing ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, or phenylpropanolamine or any of their salts, optical isomers, or salts
231 of optical isomers.

232 **2. That the provisions of this act may result in a net increase in periods of imprisonment or**
233 **commitment. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary**
234 **appropriation is \$0 for periods of imprisonment in state adult correctional facilities and cannot be**
235 **determined for periods of commitment to the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice.**