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**HOUSE BILL NO. 2187**

Offered January 13, 2025

Prefiled January 7, 2025

*A BILL to amend and reenact § 2.2-442 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Children's Ombudsman; powers and duties.*

Patron—Freitas

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That § 2.2-442 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

**§ 2.2-442. Children's Ombudsman; powers and duties.**

In addition to any powers described in this chapter, the Children's Ombudsman has the authority to do all of the following with regard to *children for whom a report of abuse or neglect was made*, children receiving child-protective services, in foster care, or placed for adoption, and children who may have died as a result of alleged abuse or neglect:

1. Pursue all necessary action, including legal action, to protect the rights and welfare of such children;
2. Pursue legislative advocacy in the best interest of such children;
3. Review policies and procedures relating to any child-serving agency's involvement with such children upon the Ombudsman's own initiative or upon receipt of a complaint and make recommendations for improvement;
4. Initiate investigations of administrative acts of the Department, a local department, a children's residential facility, or a child-placing agency in cases relating to such children upon the Ombudsman's own initiative or upon receipt of a complaint; and
5. Subject to an appropriation of funds, commence and conduct investigations into alleged violations of the rights of a foster parent.

INTRODUCED

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