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1 **HOUSE BILL NO. 169**

2 Offered January 14, 2026

3 Prefiled January 6, 2026

4 *A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding sections numbered 44-146.19:1 and 44-146.19:2, relating to*
5 *Virginia Emergency Management Preparedness and Capabilities Grant Program and Fund established;*
6 *report.*

7 Patron—Askew

8 Committee Referral Pending

9 Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

10 **1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding sections numbered 44-146.19:1 and 44-146.19:2 as**
11 **follows:**12 **§ 44-146.19:1. Virginia Emergency Management Preparedness and Capabilities Grant Program;**
13 **report.**

14 A. For the purposes of this section:

15 "Department" means the Department of Emergency Management.

16 "Emergency management professional" means an employee of the political subdivision whose duties are
17 substantially dedicated to planning for, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating the threat or impact
18 of natural, technological, and human-caused hazards.

19 "Fund" means the Virginia Emergency Management Preparedness and Capabilities Fund.

20 "Program" means the Virginia Emergency Management Preparedness and Capabilities Grant Program.

21 "Political subdivision" means a locality with an established emergency management agency established
22 pursuant to § 44-146.19.23 B. There is hereby established the Virginia Emergency Management Preparedness and Capabilities Grant
24 Program for the purpose of assisting political subdivisions with the cost of emergency management and
25 preparedness. The Program shall be administered by the Department, and the Department shall establish
26 guidelines for the administration of the Program, including (i) establishing procedures for application for a
27 grant award by a political subdivision, (ii) ensuring that grants awarded to political subdivisions are used for
28 the purpose of developing or enhancing emergency management capabilities in political subdivisions, (iii)
29 ensuring that grants are not used to supplant existing funding, and (iv) establishing monitoring and
30 accountability mechanisms to include procedures for obtaining repayment of misused funds. The Department
31 may receive an amount no greater than 2.5 percent of the total amount of grants annually awarded to cover
32 the administrative costs of managing the Program. The Department shall also develop criteria for awarding
33 grants from the Fund, including procedures for determining the amount of the grant award.34 C. All political subdivisions that receive a grant are required to provide a 50 percent match of local or
35 federal funds. Such match may include the salary and benefits of locally funded emergency management
36 professionals whose salary and benefits are not being counted as the match requirement for any other state
37 or federal grant program. Political subdivisions shall, as a condition of receiving funds from the Program,
38 use such funds only for the purposes described in this section. Such funds shall be kept segregated by the
39 political subdivision from all other funds. In the event that funds provided by the Program are used for any
40 purpose other than those described in this section, the political subdivision shall repay such funds to the
41 Program.42 D. Grants awarded to political subdivisions by the Program shall be used for the purpose of hiring a full-
43 time emergency management professional or converting a part-time emergency management professional to
44 full-time status. Upon certification to the Department by the political subdivision that it already employs at
45 least one full-time emergency management professional, or has used a portion of its grant award to convert
46 an emergency management professional from part-time to full-time status, it may then use the grant award to
47 (i) prepare or maintain a local or interjurisdictional emergency operations plan and annual emergency
48 management assessment in accordance with subsections E and F of § 44-146.19; (ii) establish an alert and
49 warning plan, including costs for the purchase of or subscription to alert origination software, to achieve or
50 maintain compliance with subsection G of § 44-146.19; (iii) purchase audiovisual, communications, or
51 information technology or power generation equipment, furniture, software, or subscription services that
52 enable the political subdivision to establish or enhance a room or facility already owned or leased by the
53 locality to serve as the locality's emergency operations center as outlined in the locality's adopted emergency
54 operations plan; or (iv) purchase a motor vehicle for the operational response or logistical support needs of
55 the locality's emergency management program, to include any upfitting or communications equipment
56 required for the vehicle to be operated in accordance with § 46.2-1023.

INTRODUCED

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59 *E. On or before December 1, 2026, and each year thereafter, the Department shall submit a report to the*
60 *Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, the Governor, and the Chairs of the House Committee on*
61 *Public Safety and the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations. The report shall include the number*
62 *of grants awarded, the number of full-time or part-time emergency management positions created or*
63 *sustained in political subdivisions using Program funding, the number of other projects funded that assisted a*
64 *political subdivision in achieving or maintaining compliance with § 44-146.19, and an executive summary of*
65 *such projects.*

66 **§ 44-146.19:2. Virginia Emergency Management Preparedness and Capabilities Fund.**

67 *There is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting fund to be known as the Virginia*
68 *Emergency Management Preparedness and Capabilities Fund. The Fund shall be established on the books of*
69 *the Comptroller. All funds appropriated for such purpose and any gifts, donations, grants, bequests, and*
70 *other funds received on its behalf shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the Fund. Interest*
71 *earned on moneys in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any moneys remaining in the*
72 *Fund, including interest thereon, at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall*
73 *remain in the Fund. Expenditures and disbursements from the Fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on*
74 *warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the State Emergency Planning Director.*