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SENATE BILL NO. 152

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 7, 2026

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 10.1-1105.1 and 10.1-1119.7 of the Code of Virginia and to repeal § 3.2-105 of the Code of Virginia, relating to State Forester; bicentennial farm program established.

Patron—Hackworth

Referred to Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 10.1-1105.1 and 10.1-1119.7 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 10.1-1105.1. Century forest and farm programs; bicentennial farm program.

A. The State Forester shall establish and administer a century forest program to honor families in the Commonwealth whose property has been in the same family for 100 years or more and includes at least 20 contiguous acres of managed forest. In order to be eligible for recognition under the program, a property shall (i) have been owned by the same family for at least 100 consecutive years; (ii) be lived on, or actually managed by, a descendant of the original owners; and (iii) have a documented history of timber harvests or forest management activities.

B. The State Forester shall establish and administer a century farm program to honor farm families in the Commonwealth whose property has been in the same family for 100 years or more. In order to be eligible for recognition under the program, a farm shall (i) have been owned by the same family for at least 100 consecutive years; (ii) be lived on, or actually farmed, by a descendant of the original owners; and (iii) gross more than \$2,500 annually from the sale of farm products.

C. The State Forester shall establish and administer a bicentennial farm program to honor farm families in the Commonwealth whose property has been in the same family for 200 years or more. In order to be eligible for recognition under the program, a farm shall (i) have been owned by the same family for at least 200 consecutive years; (ii) be lived on, or actually farmed, by a descendant of the original owners; and (iii) gross more than \$2,500 annually from the sale of farm products.

§ 10.1-1119.7. Characteristics to be considered in evaluating impacts on farm and forest lands.

A. In preparing environmental impact reports in accordance with § 10.1-1119.6, state agencies shall consider the impact of the major state project on all farm and forest lands that:

1. Have soil classified as capability class I, II, III, or IV;
2. Have an exceptional combination of physical characteristics for the production of food, feed, fiber, forest products, forage, oilseed, and other agricultural crops with minimum inputs of fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor, and without intolerable soil erosion;
3. Are valuable for production of specific high-value food and fiber crops, such as fruits, vegetables, and nursery crops and have a special combination of soil quality, location, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high quality or high yields of such crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods;
4. Are of statewide or local importance for the production of food, feed, fiber, forest products, forage, or seed crops;

5. Have been recognized under a state program such as the Clean Water Farm Award Program or the Century Farm Program, *Bicentennial Farm Program*, or Century Forest Program;

6. Are part of an agricultural or forestal district or are participating in a use value assessment and taxation program for real estate devoted to agricultural, horticultural, or forest use in accordance with the provisions of Article 4 (§ 58.1-3229 et seq.) of Chapter 32 of Title 58.1; or

7. Make a significant contribution to the local economy or the rural character of the area where the land is located.

B. The governing body of each locality, with the cooperation of the U.S.

designate the important farmlands within its jurisdiction. In designating important farmlands the governing body shall demonstrate that adequate provision has been made for nonagricultural uses within its jurisdiction.

"Prime farmland" is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for

59 fuel, fertilizer, pesticides, and labor, and without intolerable soil erosion. Prime farmland includes land that
60 possesses the above characteristics but is being used currently to produce livestock and timber. It does not
61 include land already in or committed to urban development or water storage; and

62 "Unique farmland" is land other than prime farmland that is used for production of specific high-value
63 food and fiber crops, as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It has the special combination of
64 soil quality, location, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high
65 quality or high yields of specific crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods.

66 **2. That § 3.2-105 of the Code of Virginia is repealed.**