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**HOUSE BILL NO. 522**  
Offered January 14, 2026  
Prefiled January 13, 2026

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 23.1-210.1, relating to Virginia Private College Preservation and Maintenance Fund and Program established.*

Patron—Willett

Committee Referral Pending

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

**1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 23.1-210.1 as follows:**

**§ 23.1-210.1. Virginia Private College Preservation and Maintenance Fund and Program established.**

A. As used in this section, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Certified historic structure" means a building or structure that is (i) individually listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register or the National Register of Historic Places or certified by DHR as meeting the criteria for such a listing or (ii) certified by DHR as contributing to a listed historic district.

"CICV" means the Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia.

"DHR" means the Department of Historic Resources.

"Eligible institution" means the same as that term is defined in § 23.1-628.

"Eligible project" means a renovation, restoration, repair, preservation, or deferred maintenance project at an eligible institution, including projects addressing roofs, envelopes, mechanical systems, life-safety systems, structural integrity, accessibility, and building preservation.

"Fund" means the Virginia Private College Preservation and Maintenance Fund.

"Program" means the Virginia Private College Preservation and Maintenance Program.

B. There is hereby created in the state treasury a special nonreverting fund to be known as the Virginia Private College Preservation and Maintenance Fund. The Fund shall be established on the books of the Comptroller. All funds appropriated for such purpose and any gifts, donations, grants, bequests, and other funds received on its behalf shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the Fund. Interest earned on moneys in the Fund shall remain in the Fund and be credited to it. Any moneys remaining in the Fund, including interest thereon, at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the general fund but shall remain in the Fund. Moneys in the Fund shall be used solely for the purposes of awarding matching grants on a competitive basis pursuant to the Program established in subsection C. Expenditures and disbursements from the Fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Executive Director of the Council or his designee.

C. In recognition of (i) the value of private colleges to the status and well-being of the Commonwealth's system of higher education, (ii) the current state and level of deferred maintenance at many of the private colleges in the Commonwealth, and (iii) the need to address these issues in order to preserve the rich options for students to pursue higher education in the Commonwealth, there is hereby established the Virginia Private College Preservation and Maintenance Program for the purpose of awarding matching grants from the Fund to eligible institutions on a competitive basis to assist with the funding of renovation, restoration, repair, preservation, and deferred maintenance projects at such institutions, including eligible projects.

D. The Program shall be administered by the Council, which shall serve as the grant maker and fiscal agent. In administering the Program, the Council shall collaborate with CICV and DHR and shall (i) establish such deadlines, processes, procedures, and forms as it deems necessary or appropriate for the proper administration of the Program, taking into account timelines relevant to the state budgeting process; (ii) for the purpose of efficiency, uniformity, and orderliness, utilize a web-based grants administration system, including WebGrants or any successor system, to receive, evaluate, award, and monitor grants; (iii) require all grant applications from eligible institutions to be coordinated, submitted, and recommended by CICV; (iv) require grant applicants to provide sufficient evidence of matching funds for the renovation, restoration, repair, preservation, or deferred maintenance project in an amount equal to the amount of the grant to be awarded pursuant to the Program; (v) establish clear, consistent, and objective criteria for the grading or ranking of grant applications and consider the establishment of a waitlist in the event that the total amount of requested grant funds exceeds available funds; and (vi) in consultation with CICV and DHR, establish procedures for technical review and project monitoring for projects involving a certified historic structure or a structure determined by DHR to be potentially eligible for certification.

E. The Council, in consultation with CICV and DHR, shall structure the Program to include an application process that (i) determines eligibility, (ii) reviews scope of work, and (iii) documents completion and closeout. For projects involving a certified historic structure or a structure determined by DHR to be

59 *potentially eligible for certification, the Council shall (a) require baseline documentation sufficient for DHR*  
60 *review, (b) provide for DHR technical input on the proposed scope of work and best practices, and (c)*  
61 *provide for project monitoring and closeout documentation as a condition of final payment.*

62 *F. The Council may reserve up to five percent of the Fund annually for reasonable costs of administering,*  
63 *reviewing, and monitoring grants under this section, and may provide a portion of such amount to DHR for*  
64 *costs related to technical review, monitoring, and closeout, thereby holding such agencies harmless for*  
65 *administration of the Program.*

66 *G. The Council may issue guidelines, forms, and procedures necessary to implement this section and shall*  
67 *report annually to the Chairs of the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on*  
68 *Finance and Appropriations on awards, project status, and outcomes.*

69 **2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on January 1, 2027.**