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1 **HOUSE BILL NO. 905**

2 Offered January 14, 2026

3 Prefiled January 13, 2026

4 *A BILL to amend and reenact § 20-25 of the Code of Virginia, relating to persons other than ministers who*  
5 *may perform rites of marriage; clerk; issuance of order; bond requirement.*

6 Patron—Lopez

7 Committee Referral Pending

8 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**9 **1. That § 20-25 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**10 **§ 20-25. Persons other than ministers who may perform rites.**11 Upon ~~petition~~ *application* filed with the clerk of the *circuit court* and payment of applicable clerk's fees,  
12 ~~any circuit court judge~~ *such clerk* may issue an order authorizing one or more persons resident in the circuit  
13 in which the ~~judge sits~~ *application was filed* to celebrate the rites of marriage in the Commonwealth. Any  
14 person so authorized ~~shall~~ *may be required to*, before acting, enter into bond in the penalty of \$500, with or  
15 without surety, as the ~~court~~ *clerk* may direct; however, upon a showing that the person would otherwise be  
16 qualified for in forma pauperis status, the ~~court~~ *clerk* may waive such bond. Any order made under this  
17 section may be rescinded at any time. No oath shall be required of a person authorized to celebrate the rites of  
18 marriage, nor shall such person be considered an officer of the Commonwealth by virtue of such  
19 authorization.20 Any judge or justice of a court of record, any judge of a district court, any retired judge or justice of the  
21 Commonwealth, any active, senior, or retired federal judge or justice who is a resident of the Commonwealth,  
22 or any current or former (i) member of the General Assembly, (ii) Governor of Virginia, (iii) Lieutenant  
23 Governor of Virginia, (iv) Attorney General of Virginia, (v) Virginia member of the United States Senate or  
24 United States House of Representatives, or (vi) clerk of a circuit court of the Commonwealth who is a  
25 resident of the Commonwealth may celebrate the rites of marriage anywhere in the Commonwealth without  
26 the necessity of bond or order of authorization.

INTRODUCED

HB905