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SENATE BILL NO. 531

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 13, 2026

A *BILL* to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 15.2-2292.3, relating to zoning; development and use of accessory dwelling units.

Patrons—Srinivasan and Salim

Referred to Committee on Local Government

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 15.2-2292.3 as follows:****§ 15.2-2292.3. Development and use of accessory dwelling units.**

A. As used in this section, "accessory dwelling unit" or "ADU" means an attached or detached dwelling unit on a residential dwelling lot that:

1. Provides complete independent living facilities for one or more individuals;
2. Is located on the same lot as a proposed or existing primary residence; and
3. Includes facilities for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.

B. Zoning ordinances for single-family residential zoning districts shall be deemed to include accessory dwelling units as a permitted accessory use, and no locality shall require a special use permit for an ADU or compliance with any other requirements except as provided in this section.

C. Any person proposing an ADU shall first obtain an ADU permit from the locality, for which the locality may charge a fee of no more than \$500. Such fee shall be in addition to any other applicable fees, including inspection, site, or building permit fees, that may be required in connection with the ADU. A locality shall issue the permit if the applicant demonstrates that the ADU complies with the requirements of this section and the local codes and ordinances referenced herein.

D. Localities shall allow at least one accessory dwelling unit located on a lot with a single-family dwelling in any part of the locality where the locality allows single-family dwellings.

E. Localities may require the following:

1. A lease term for the rental of an ADU of 30 consecutive days or longer;
2. Replacement of a primary dwelling's required parking if the construction of the ADU eliminates such parking;

3. Limits on floor area, lot coverage, and impervious area of an ADU of no less than (i) 350 square feet on lots less than 2,500 square feet and (ii) 500 square feet on lots 2,500 square feet or greater;

4. Compliance with (i) building codes, including the requirements of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (§ 36-97 et seq.), for an accessory dwelling unit if the ADU is attached or for a dwelling unit if the ADU is detached; (ii) water, sewer, septic, emergency access, flood zone, and stormwater requirements; (iii) historic and architectural districts and corridor protection restrictions; and (iv) Air Installations Compatible Use Zone restrictions;

5. Owner occupancy of the ADU or the primary dwelling, but not both, only at the time an application is submitted to construct or convert an accessory dwelling unit;

6. No ADUs on a residential lot that has more than one dwelling unit; and

7. No ADUs sold separately or subdivided from the primary dwelling.

F. Localities shall not require the following:

1. Construction of new dedicated parking for an ADU, unless the ADU is located on a block where on-street parking is prohibited at all times for any reason, including ensuring access for emergency services, or payment of fees in lieu of constructing additional parking to accommodate an ADU;

2. Rear or side setbacks for ADUs that are more than five feet from the property line;

3. Restrictions for ADUs that are more restrictive than those for single-family dwellings within the same zoning area with regard to height, rear or side setbacks, lot size or coverage, or building frontage;

4. A restrictive covenant concerning an ADU on a lot or parcel zoned for residential use by a single-family dwelling;

5. Improvements to public streets as a condition of allowing an ADU, except as necessary to reconstruct or repair a public street that is disturbed as a result of the construction of the ADU; or

6. Consanguinity or affinity between the occupants of an ADU and the primary dwelling.

G. Nothing in this section shall be construed to supersede or limit contracts or agreements between or among individuals or private entities related to the use of real property, including recorded declarations and covenants, the provisions of condominium instruments of a condominium created pursuant to the Virginia Condominium Act (§ 55.1-1900 et seq.), the declaration of a common interest community as defined in

59 § 54.1-2345, the cooperative instruments of a cooperative created pursuant to the Virginia Real Estate
60 Cooperative Act (§ 55.1-2100 et seq.), or any declaration of a property owners' association created pursuant
61 to the Property Owners' Association Act (§ 55.1-1800 et seq.).

62 H. Nothing in this section shall apply to any existing permits for an ADU approved by the locality prior to
63 July 1, 2027.

64 I. Nothing in this section shall be construed to restrict a locality's passage prior to July 1, 2027, of an
65 ADU ordinance, or a subsequent amendment thereof, that substantially complies with the requirements of
66 this section.

67 J. Nothing in this section shall apply to a locality that adopted an ADU ordinance prior to January 1,
68 2026, if such ordinance does not deem an attached or detached ADU to be a special use.

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