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SENATE BILL NO. 705

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 14, 2026

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 2.2-1501.2, relating to Department of Planning and Budget; Regulatory Budget Program established; report.

Patron—Durant

Referred to Committee on Finance and Appropriations

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 2.2-1501.2 as follows:

§ 2.2-1501.2. Additional duties of Department; Regulatory Budget Program; guidance; report.

A. As used in this section:

"Agency" means any executive branch agency subject to the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.). "Agency" does not include the Office of the Attorney General or the Department of Law.

"Catalog" means the document prepared by each agency that identifies (i) the total number and type of regulations and regulatory requirements currently promulgated or administered by the agency and (ii) any specific federal or state mandates or statutory authority that requires such regulations and associated requirements.

"Department" means the Department of Planning and Budget.

"Program" means the Regulatory Budget Program established in subsection B.

"Regulation" means the same as that term is defined in § 2.2-4001. "Regulation" does not include (i) regulations and associated regulatory requirements where no agency discretion is involved and that are necessary to conform to Virginia statutory law, the appropriation act, or federal law or regulations; (ii) regulations of the boards served by the Department of Health Professions or the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation pursuant to Title 54.1 that are necessary to revise fees in accordance with § 54.1-113; (iii) statements or policies concerning the internal management of any agency; (iv) guidance documents; (v) declaratory rulings; or (vi) intra-agency or interagency memoranda.

"Regulatory requirement" means any action required to be taken or information required to be provided in accordance with a regulation. "Regulatory requirement" includes requirements contained in documents incorporated by reference to other sources in accordance with the regulations of the Virginia Code Commission.

"Streamlining" means reducing the burden of a regulatory requirement without eliminating the requirement completely. The Department shall issue guidance describing how agencies account for reduced burdens resulting from regulatory streamlining.

B. There is created within the Department the Regulatory Budget Program. The Program shall consist of the following elements:

1. Agencies shall reduce overall regulatory requirements by 25 percent by January 1, 2029, from the number of requirements that existed on January 15, 2022. The Department shall issue guidance setting forth the process by which agencies shall calculate their regulatory reductions for purposes of meeting the 25 percent reduction target.

2. The catalog data shall be updated annually and reported to the Department, in a manner specified by the Department, and published on the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall.

3. Progress toward the 25 percent reduction target shall be measured by the number of regulations and regulatory requirements that are either increased, eliminated, or streamlined through regulatory or other action. Progress shall be reflected in the catalog and reported in a manner specified by the Department. Each agency shall be responsible for ensuring that any information reported to the Department is accurate and complete.

C. The Department shall issue guidance for agencies that addresses the following: (i) how to best measure regulatory requirements to promote consistency across agencies; (ii) how agencies may determine which regulatory requirements are discretionary and which are mandated by state or federal law; (iii) how documents incorporated by reference are to be treated in the baseline catalogs; (iv) how to count streamlining of regulatory requirements toward the 25 percent reduction target; and (v) how agencies shall report information to the Department, including progress toward the 25 percent reduction target. The Department shall seek input from the Office of the Attorney General and the Registrar of Regulations in the drafting of guidance pursuant to this subsection.

D. When an agency identifies a regulation or regulatory requirement proposed for elimination or modification that requires a change in state law, the responsible Secretary shall report the recommendation

59 *to the Speaker of the House of Delegates, the Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules, and the Department.*  
60 *The Speaker of the House of Delegates and the Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules shall assign*  
61 *recommendations to relevant committees that shall assess and may act, in consultation with the agency, upon*  
62 *these recommendations in the regular session of the General Assembly immediately following the year in*  
63 *which the recommendation was made.*

64 *E. If necessary to meet the 25 percent reduction target, each agency shall also initiate reforms through a*  
65 *rulemaking or nonregulatory action or through the legislative recommendation process to the General*  
66 *Assembly. If an agency is unable to reach the 25 percent reduction target, it shall provide a separate report*  
67 *to the Department stating the reasons for not meeting the goal.*

68 *F. The Department shall report to the Speaker of the House of Delegates and the Chair of the Senate*  
69 *Committee on Rules on the progress of the Program no later than October 1 each year, beginning October 1,*  
70 *2026.*

71 *If by October 1, 2026, the Program has achieved less than 75 percent of the 25 percent reduction target,*  
72 *either by initiating rulemaking actions or other streamlining actions or through the legislative*  
73 *recommendation process to the General Assembly, the Department shall include the reasons for not meeting*  
74 *the target reduction in the next available annual report to the Speaker of the House of Delegates and the*  
75 *Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules.*

76 *The Department shall include in the annual report any additional information the Department determines*  
77 *may be helpful to support the General Assembly's regulatory reduction and reform efforts.*

78 *If by October 1, 2026, the Program has achieved less than 50 percent of the 25 percent reduction target,*  
79 *either by initiating rulemaking actions or other streamlining actions or through the legislative*  
80 *recommendation process to the General Assembly, the Speaker of the House of Delegates and the Chair of*  
81 *the Senate Committee on Rules may direct the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate*  
82 *Committee on Finance and Appropriations to review the regulatory budget efforts of any agency that has*  
83 *achieved less than 50 percent of the 25 percent reduction target and report to the General Assembly any*  
84 *findings and recommendations regarding any policies, practices, and methods that may be adopted by the*  
85 *agency to successfully achieve the 25 percent reduction target.*

86 *G. The Department shall track and report on the extent to which agencies comply with existing*  
87 *requirements to periodically review all regulations every four years. Agencies shall provide to the*  
88 *Department a schedule listing each regulation and regulatory requirement to be reviewed in each of the four*  
89 *years, to be published on the Virginia Regulatory Town Hall.*

90 **2. That the provisions of this act shall expire on January 1, 2029.**