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SENATE BILL NO. 769**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE**(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations
on January 22, 2026)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Lucas)

A *BILL to amend and reenact Items 5 and 6 and Enactments 14, 15, and 16 of Chapter 725 of the Acts of Assembly of 2025, which appropriates the public revenues for two years ending, respectively, on June 30, 2025, and June 30, 2026, and to amend Chapter 725 of the Acts of Assembly of 2025, which appropriates the public revenues for two years ending, respectively, on June 30, 2025, and June 30, 2026, by adding an item numbered 78.10 and by adding enactments numbered 17, 18, 19, and 20 which appropriates the public revenues for two years ending, respectively, on June 30, 2025, and June 30, 2026; and to provide for the submission to the voters of proposed amendments to the Constitution of Virginia by amending Section 6 of Article II and by adding in the Schedule a section numbered 6; and to repeal § 30-13 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the general appropriation act; Department of Elections.*

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That Items 5 and 6 and Enactments 14, 15, and 16 of Chapter 725 of the Acts of Assembly of 2025 are amended and reenacted and that Chapter 725 of the Acts of Assembly of 2025 is amended and reenacted by adding an item numbered 78.10 and by adding enactments numbered 17, 18, 19, and 20, as follows:

Item 5. Division of Legislative Automated Services

a	5		First Year - FY2025	Second Year - FY2026
b		Information Technology Development and Operations (82000)	\$6,950,723	\$7,100,723
c		Computer Operations Services (82001)	\$6,950,723	\$7,100,723
d		Fund Sources:		\$7,200,723
e		General	\$6,663,128	\$6,813,128
f		Special	\$287,595	\$6,913,128
				\$287,595

Authority: Title 30, Chapter 3.2, Code of Virginia.

A. Out of this appropriation shall be paid the annual salary of the Director, Division of Legislative Automated Systems, \$210,452 from June 10, 2024 to June 9, 2025 and \$216,766 from June 10, 2025 to June 30, 2026.

B. Included in this appropriation is funding sufficient for the ongoing replacement of a legacy legislative bill tracking system. The expenditure of these funds is contingent on the Director of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems developing a detailed implementation plan and submitting the plan to the Committee on Joint Rules for its approval. Any procurement of a replacement legislative bill tracking system shall be exempt from the provisions of the Virginia Public Procurement Act (§ 2.2-4300 et. seq.) of the Code of Virginia and the contract review provisions of § 2.2-2012. The plan may propose to procure a replacement legislative bill tracking system using (i) a request for information or a request for proposal, singly or jointly or in any combination thereof, (ii) such other industry recognized procurement method for procuring a management information system, or (iii) such other procurement method that comports with the best interests of the Commonwealth in the determination of the Director.

C. The Director, Division of Legislative Automated Systems, shall provide a detailed accounting of funding provided since fiscal year 2020 for the replacement of the legacy legislative tracking system, and separately for other legislative system replacements and upgrades. Such accounting shall be provided to the Chairs of the Joint Rules Committee, the House Appropriations Committee, and the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee by October 1, 2024.

D. Out of the amounts included in this item, \$201,140 the first year and \$201,140 the second year from the general fund is provided to complete the replacement of a legacy legislative bill tracking system.

E. Out of the amounts included in this item, \$50,000 the first year and \$50,000 the second year from the general fund is provided for software, security, and infrastructure upgrades for the Division of Legislative Automated Systems.

F. Out of this appropriation, \$100,000 the second year from the general fund shall be provided for costs associated with the April 21, 2026, special election.

Item 6. Division of Legislative Services

a	6		First Year - FY2025	Second Year - FY2026
b		Legislative Research and Analysis (78400)	\$9,640,479	\$9,640,479
			\$9,915,804	\$9,860,479

60	c	Bill drafting and Preparation (78401)	\$9,640,479	\$9,640,479
61	d	Fund Sources:	\$9,915,804	\$9,980,479
62	e	General	\$9,620,449	\$9,620,449
63				\$9,840,449
64	f	Special	\$20,030	\$20,030
65			\$295,355	

66 Authority: Title 30, Chapter 2.2, Code of Virginia.

67 A. Out of this appropriation shall be paid the annual salary of the Director, Division of Legislative
 68 Services, \$202,701 from June 10, 2024 to June 9, 2025 and ~~\$208,782~~ \$219,221 from June 10, 2025 to June
 69 30, 2026.

70 B. Notwithstanding the salary set out in paragraph A. of this item, the Committee on Joint Rules may
 71 establish a salary range for the Director, Division of Legislative Services.

72 C. The Division of Legislative Services shall continue to provide administrative support to include payroll
 73 processing, accounting, and travel expense processing at no charge to the Behavioral Health Commission,
 74 the Chesapeake Bay Commission, the Joint Commission on Health Care, the Virginia Commission on Youth,
 75 the Commission on Electric Utility Regulation, and the Virginia State Crime Commission.

76 D. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Senate Joint Resolution 10 (2022 Session) Joint
 77 Subcommittee to Examine the Commonwealth's Pandemic Response shall continue conducting its study and
 78 meet as needed to provide a final report by December 1, 2024. Any remaining appropriation at year end
 79 shall be carried forward to the subsequent fiscal year to support the Joint Subcommittee.

80 E. The Division shall procure additional expertise as necessary in its role as staff support to the Virginia
 81 Gaming Commission established by House Joint Resolution 548, 2023 Acts of Assembly. In addition to the
 82 activities directed in HJR 548, the Joint Subcommittee shall evaluate all potential options to consolidate
 83 gaming regulation and oversight in the Commonwealth and provide a detailed transition plan in support of
 84 recommendations.

85 F. Out of this appropriation, \$275,325 the first year from dedicated special revenue is provided to
 86 implement the recommendations of the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund Advisory Committee.

87 G. Out of this appropriation, \$120,000 from the general fund the second year shall be provided for one
 88 position to support the Commission on Women's Health.

89 F. Out of this appropriation, \$100,000 the second year from the general fund shall be provided for costs
 90 associated with the April 21, 2026, special election.

91 Item 78.10. Department of Elections

92	a	78.10	First Year - FY2025	Second Year - FY2026
93	b	Financial Assistance to Localities - General (72800)	\$0	\$5,000,000
94	c	Funding for Special Elections and Assistance to Localities (72823)	\$0	\$5,000,000
95	d	Fund Sources:		
96	e	General	\$0	\$5,000,000

97 Authority: Title 24.2, Chapter 1, Code of Virginia

98 A. Out of this appropriation, \$5,000,000 the second year from the general fund shall be provided to the
 99 Department of Elections for the costs associated with the April 21, 2026, special election. Unless otherwise
 100 prohibited by law, the funding may be used for voter education, administrative costs of the Department, grant
 101 funding to localities to defray the costs of absentee voting in-person, and other costs associated with the April
 102 21, 2026, special election.

103 B. Localities shall establish voter satellite offices for the April 21, 2026, special election, that allow for
 104 appropriate access to in-person absentee voting.

105 **14. § 1.** It shall be the duty of the officers responsible for conducting the election directed by law to be held
 106 on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November each year, to conduct an election, at the places
 107 appointed for holding the same, on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, for the purpose of taking the sense of the
 108 qualified voters upon the ratification or rejection of the proposed amendments to the Constitution of
 109 Virginia, contained herein and in the joint resolution proposing such amendments, to wit:

110 Amend Section 6 of Article II of the Constitution of Virginia and amend the Constitution of Virginia by
 111 adding in the Schedule a section numbered 6 as follows:

112 ARTICLE II

113 FRANCHISE AND OFFICERS

114 Section 6. Apportionment.

115 Members of the House of Representatives of the United States and members of the Senate and of the
 116 House of Delegates of the General Assembly shall be elected from electoral districts established pursuant to
 117 this section and Section 6-A of this Constitution. Every electoral district shall be composed of contiguous and
 118
 119

compact territory and shall be so constituted as to give, as nearly as is practicable, representation in proportion to the population of the district. Every electoral district shall be drawn in accordance with the requirements of federal and state laws that address racial and ethnic fairness, including the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended, and judicial decisions interpreting such laws. Districts shall provide, where practicable, opportunities for racial and ethnic communities to elect candidates of their choice.

The Commonwealth shall be reapportioned into electoral districts in accordance with this section and Section 6-A in the year 2021 and every ten years thereafter, *except that the General Assembly shall be authorized to modify one or more congressional districts at any point following the adoption of a decennial reapportionment law, but prior to the next decennial census, in the event that any State of the United States of America conducts a redistricting of such state's congressional districts at any point following that state's adoption of a decennial reapportionment law for any purpose other than (i) the completion of the state's decennial redistricting in response to a federal census and reapportionment mandated by the Constitution of the United States and established in federal law or (ii) as ordered by any state or federal court to remedy an unlawful or unconstitutional district map.*

Any such decennial reapportionment law, *or reapportionment law modifying one or more congressional districts*, shall take effect immediately and not be subject to the limitations contained in Article IV, Section 13, of this Constitution.

The districts delineated in ~~the decennial~~ any reapportionment law shall be implemented for the November general election for the United States House of Representatives, Senate, or House of Delegates, respectively, that is held immediately prior to the expiration of the term being served in the year that the reapportionment law is ~~required to be enacted~~. A member in office at the time that a ~~decennial~~ redistricting law is enacted shall complete his term of office and shall continue to represent the district from which he was elected for the duration of such term of office so long as he does not move his residence from the district from which he was elected. Any vacancy occurring during such term shall be filled from the same district that elected the member whose vacancy is being filled.

SCHEDULE

Section 6. Application and duration of certain redistricting amendments.

The authorization in Article II, Section 6 authorizing the General Assembly to modify one or more congressional districts at any point following adoption of a decennial reapportionment law in the event that any State of the United States of America conducts a redistricting of such state's congressional districts at any point following that state's adoption of a decennial reapportionment law shall be limited to making such modifications between January 1, 2025, and October 31, 2030, in response to actions taken by another state between January 1, 2025, and October 31, 2030.

§ 2. The ballot shall contain the following question:

"Question: Should the Constitution of Virginia be amended to allow the General Assembly to temporarily adopt new congressional districts to restore fairness in the upcoming elections, while ensuring Virginia's standard redistricting process resumes for all future redistricting after the 2030 census?"

The ballots shall be prepared, distributed and voted, and the results of the election shall be ascertained and certified, in the manner prescribed by § 24.2-684 of the Code of Virginia. The State Board of Elections shall cause to be sent to the electoral boards of each county and city sufficient copies of the full text of the amendments and question contained herein for the officers of election to post in each polling place on April 21, 2026. The State Board of Elections shall be deemed to be in compliance with the provisions of § 30-19.9 of the Code if the information required by that section is sent to the electoral boards on or before Monday, March 2, 2026.

The electoral board of each county and city shall, as soon as possible but no later than six days after the day of the election, make out, certify, and forward an abstract of the votes cast for and against such proposed amendments in the manner now prescribed by law in relation to votes cast in general elections.

Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection B of § 24.2-679, the State Board of Elections shall meet as soon as possible after receipt of the certified abstracts but no later than fourteen days after the day of the election to open and canvass such abstracts and examine and report the whole number of votes cast at the election for and against such amendments in the manner now prescribed by law in relation to votes cast in general elections. The State Board of Elections shall record a certified copy of such report in its office and without delay make out and transmit to the Governor an official copy of such report, certified by it. The Governor shall without delay make proclamation of the result, stating therein the aggregate vote for and against the amendments.

If a majority of those voting vote in favor of the amendments, they shall become effective upon certification by the State Board of Elections.

The expenses incurred in conducting this election shall be defrayed as in the case of election of members of the General Assembly.

15. That § 30-13 of the Code of Virginia is repealed.

16. That the provisions of the fifteenth enactment of this act shall be retroactive effective beginning

182 *July 1, 1971.*

183 *17. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, in any action or suit related to any resolution*
184 *concerning a constitutional amendment, any election related to a constitutional amendment, any enacted*
185 *constitutional amendment, or any related statute, including any claim related to the process, efficacy,*
186 *implementation, or interpretation thereof, venue shall only be proper in the Circuit Court of the City of*
187 *Richmond. The provisions of this enactment shall be effective September 1, 2025, and shall be broadly*
188 *construed. Upon passage, any pending suit affected by this legislation shall be immediately transferred to*
189 *the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond.*

190 ~~414.~~ 18. That the provisions of the first and second ~~enactment~~ enactments of this act shall expire at
191 midnight on June 30, 2026.

192 ~~515.~~ 19. That the provisions of the ~~second~~ third, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh,
193 ~~twelfth, and thirteenth,~~ fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth ~~enactment~~ enactments of this act
194 shall have no expiration date.

195 ~~616.~~ 20. That the provisions of the ~~third~~ fourth enactment of this act are declarative of existing law
196 and shall have no expiration date.

197 2. That this act is effective on its passage as provided in § 1-214 of the Code of Virginia.