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SENATE BILL NO. 519

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations on February 5, 2026)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Deeds)

A BILL to direct the Department of Conservation and Recreation to assess the feasibility of achieving permanent conservation of 20 percent of the land area and 10 percent of the urban areas of the Commonwealth by 2036.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. *§ 1. That the Department of Conservation and Recreation (the Department) shall assess how best to achieve permanent conservation by 2036 of (i) 20 percent of the land area of the Commonwealth and (ii) 10 percent of urban areas of the Commonwealth. In conducting the assessment, the Department shall consider (i) the current percentage of protected land area in the Commonwealth; (ii) a survey of the land areas permanently conserved in the Commonwealth over the previous 10 years; (iii) best practices employed by other states to prioritize permanent land conservation, generally and in urban areas specifically; (iv) the current percentage of the aggregate acreage of the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth's urban areas that are permanently conserved; and (v) an estimate of state funding required to achieve permanent conservation of 20 percent of the land area of the Commonwealth and 10 percent of the urban areas of the Commonwealth by 2036. The Department shall submit a report on its findings and and any recommendations to achieve such permanent conservation goals to the Chairs of the Senate Committees on Finance and Appropriations and Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources and the House Committees on Appropriations and Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources no later than November 1, 2026.*

SENATE SUBSTITUTE

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