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HOUSE BILL NO. 1421
AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
(Proposed by the House Committee on Public Safety
on _____)
(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Keys-Gamarra)

A BILL to direct the Office of the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security to convene a work group to evaluate the feasibility of transferring administrative and supervisory authority of the State Board of Local and Regional Jails to another state agency or independent oversight body.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. That the Office of the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security shall convene a stakeholder work group to evaluate the feasibility of transferring the administrative and supervisory authority of the State Board of Local and Regional Jails (the State Board) from the Department of Corrections to another state agency or an independent oversight body. The work group shall be composed of interested parties and stakeholders, including (i) representatives from civil rights organizations; (ii) advocates for incarcerated persons and their families; (iii) formerly incarcerated persons; (iv) representatives from the Virginia Association of Regional Jails and the Virginia Sheriffs' Association; and (v) experts in correctional oversight and restorative justice. The work group shall evaluate the feasibility of various oversight models, including the establishment of a fully autonomous ombudsman's office or the integration of the State Board into the Office of the Department of Corrections Ombudsman within the Office of the State Inspector General. The work group shall submit its plan, recommended a timeline, and recommend any necessary legislative proposals for executing the transfer to the Chairs of the House Committee for Courts of Justice, House Committee on Public Safety, Senate Committee for Courts of Justice, and Senate Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services by November 1, 2026.