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HOUSE BILL NO. 494

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the House Committee on Appropriations)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Guzman)

House Amendments in [] - February 12, 2026

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 2.2-2903.01, relating to Virginia Personnel Act; hiring preference in state government; certain former federal employees.*

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 2.2-2903.01 as follows:

§ 2.2-2903.01. Hiring preference for certain former federal employees.

A. *In a manner consistent with federal and state law, if any person [~~who is a resident of the Commonwealth and~~] who [~~has been~~ was] terminated from a position of employment with the federal government on or after January 1, 2025, due to a reduction in the federal budget [; or] initiatives put in place by the federal Department of Government Efficiency, [~~or any other effort deemed unrelated to a violation in the workplace, workplace performance, or a dereliction of duty~~] applies for employment with the Commonwealth, such person's status as a former federal employee [~~may be given consideration during the selection process,~~ and such prior federal employment shall be deemed a preferred qualification for employment with the Commonwealth,] provided that such person meets all of the knowledge, skill, and ability requirements for the available position.*

B. *The provisions of this section shall not be construed to require the selection of any applicant or to create an entitlement to employment.*

C. *On or before January 1 of each year, the Department of Human Resource Management shall submit a report to the Governor and the General Assembly that includes the number of job applications submitted by candidates who self-identified as former federal employees whose status may be considered as provided in subsection A, as well as the number of jobs offered to such candidates.*

2. That the provisions of this act shall expire on January 21, 2029.

3. [~~The~~ That the] Department of Human Resource Management shall modify the state employment application system to permit an applicant for an open position to (i) self-identify as a former federal employee whose former federal employee status may be considered under the provisions of this act, and (ii) indicate if they have documentation to verify such status.

ENGROSSED

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