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HOUSE BILL NO. 1511
AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
(Proposed by the House Committee on Health and Human Services
on _____)
(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Feggans)

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 63.2 a section numbered 63.2-214.4 and by adding a section numbered 63.2-319.1, relating to Fatherhood Initiative; fatherhood needs assessment.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Article 1 of Chapter 2 of Title 63.2 a section numbered 63.2-214.4 and by adding a section numbered 63.2-319.1 as follows:

§ 63.2-214.4. Fatherhood Initiative.

A. The Department shall develop and implement the Fatherhood Initiative (the Initiative). The Initiative should focus on the recognition of fathers as essential partners in child and family well-being, addressing a critical gap in family support services and promoting positive father involvement linked to improved maternal, child, and family outcomes.

B. The Initiative shall, at a minimum, involve the establishment of a statewide father engagement media and education campaign.

C. The Department shall collaborate with other relevant agencies of the Commonwealth to develop and implement the Initiative.

D. The Department shall implement the Initiative using existing resources and by identifying, coordinating, and highlighting existing state and federal funding sources, programs, and services that are currently available and align with the goals of the Initiative. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require new appropriations or the establishment of a separate grant program.

§ 63.2-319.1. Fatherhood needs assessment.

A. Each local board may ensure that it is addressing the unique needs of the fathers of children who are served by the local department of social services.

B. Each local board may:

1. Conduct an initial assessment of its engagement with such fathers and provision of and referral to father-oriented services.

2. Create an action plan to address any gaps identified through the assessment and implement the action plan.

33 *C. The Department may annually review how the local board is meeting the needs of fathers, including, at*
34 *a minimum, how the local board is helping fathers establish positive, stable relationships with their children*
35 *and assisting fathers in receiving needed services. The local board may provide any relevant information on*
36 *how it is meeting the needs of these fathers to the Department.*