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**HOUSE BILL NO. 778**

Offered January 14, 2026

A *BILL* to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 15.2-925.2, relating to unpermitted temporary gatherings; local enhanced enforcement actions.

Patrons—Thornton; Senator: Locke

Referred to Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 15.2-925.2 as follows:****§ 15.2-925.2. Pop-up events; local enhanced enforcement actions.**

A. As used in this section, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Pop-up event" means any unpermitted, temporary gathering, activity, or event, whether pre-planned or occurring spontaneously, where more than 50 individuals attend or are expected to attend, and that presents a potential risk to public health, safety, or welfare or may significantly disrupt normal community operations. Such normal community operations include disruptions to traffic flow, commercial activity, neighborhood tranquility, or access to public spaces.

"Pop-up event zone" or "zone" means a contiguous area on or along a roadway, street, or highway that is designated by warning signs. "Pop-up event zone" includes all parking structures and parking lots and any other property, whether public or private, immediately inside, adjacent to, or along the designated area.

B. Any locality may by ordinance establish pop-up event zones. A local governing body's presiding officer, a locality's chief law-enforcement officer, and a locality's chief administrative officer shall be in concurrence to activate such zone.

C. A pop-up event ordinance shall require:

1. Advance notification. A locality shall notify the public through an online webpage and social media accounts operated by the locality prior to activating a pop-up event zone, providing as much advance notice as is practicable; and

2. A public information webpage. A dedicated webpage shall be launched detailing all enhanced enforcement measures, including descriptions of the following:

a. Any reduced speed limits, with specific new limits clearly listed;

b. Curfew times for unaccompanied minors, with exact start and end times;

c. Any occupancy limits that are put in place;

d. Zone signage at entry and exit points where clearly visible signage will be posted at each point of ingress and egress of the pop-up event zone, informing the public that a zone is active and that traffic fines are increased within the zone; and

e. Speed limit signage, if applicable. If speed limits are reduced within the pop-up event zone, the webpage will note that additional signage shall be displayed to clearly indicate the new speed limit to motorists. Electronic messaging boards will satisfy this requirement.

D. The ordinance shall grant a locality the authority to take the following enhanced enforcement actions:

1. Declare the pop-up event zone a gun-free zone;

2. Establish enhanced traffic fines within the pop-up event zone, not to exceed \$1,000 per violation;

3. Establish temporary speed limit reductions within the pop-up event zone to enhance pedestrian and vehicular safety;

4. Establish and enforce occupancy limits on both public and private property within the zone; and

5. Declare a curfew for unaccompanied minors. A curfew may begin as early as 6:00 p.m. and shall (i) specify the hours of the curfew and the geographic area to which the curfew applies and (ii) contain exceptions for (a) any person traveling to or from home, work, or a place of worship; (b) medical personnel; (c) members of the press; (d) federal, state, and local employees and volunteers engaged in official business, including emergency response; (e) military personnel, including National Guard troops; (f) travel to or from public meetings of the local governing body; (g) persons seeking emergency services or fleeing any emergency or danger or acting to save other persons from an emergency or danger; and (h) persons who are incapacitated or who are seeking medical care for themselves or others.

E. The ordinance shall grant a locality the authority to recover all relevant costs and fees incurred from the designation and enforcement of the zone directly from event organizers.

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