

26104800D

HOUSE BILL NO. 1232

Offered January 14, 2026

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 30 a chapter numbered 70, consisting of sections numbered 30-454 through 30-461, relating to Commission on Black Land Loss; study; report.

Patron—Delaney

Referred to Committee on Rules

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 30 a chapter numbered 70, consisting of sections numbered 30-454 through 30-461, as follows:

CHAPTER 70.**COMMISSION ON BLACK LAND LOSS.****§ 30-454. Commission on Black Land Loss; purpose.**

The Commission on Black Land Loss (the Commission) is established in the legislative branch of state government. The purpose of the Commission is to study existing and historical laws utilized by the state and localities to take land from Black people, including discriminatory tax laws that unfairly or disproportionately prevent Black people from home and land ownership and laws that allow localities to assess tax arrears against deceased Black homeowners or landowners in efforts to seize the land and sell the land, with special consideration given to land that was taken that belonged to descendants of enslaved persons, the value of that land at the time it was taken, and the value of the land today.

§ 30-455. Membership; terms; vacancies; chair and vice-chair.

The Commission shall consist of 17 members that include 10 legislative members and seven nonlegislative citizen members. Members shall be appointed as follows:

1. Six members of the House of Delegates to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates;

2. Four members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules;

3. Four nonlegislative citizen members to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates, of whom one shall be recommended by the Virginia Poverty Law Center and one shall be recommended by the Capitol Region Land Conservancy; and

4. Three nonlegislative citizen members to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules, of whom one shall be recommended by the Piedmont Environmental Council and one shall be recommended by the Black Land Loss Narrative Archive Project.

Nonlegislative citizen members of the Commission shall be citizens of the Commonwealth. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the chair of the Commission and the respective Clerk, nonlegislative citizen members shall only be reimbursed for travel originating and ending within the Commonwealth for the purpose of attending meetings.

Legislative members of the Commission shall serve terms coincident with their terms of office. Nonlegislative citizen members shall be appointed for a term of two years. Appointments to fill vacancies, other than by expiration of a term, shall be for the unexpired terms. Legislative members and nonlegislative citizen members may be reappointed. However, no nonlegislative citizen member shall serve more than four consecutive two-year terms. The remainder of any term to which a member is appointed to fill a vacancy shall not constitute a term in determining the member's eligibility for reappointment. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments.

The Commission shall elect a chair and vice-chair from among its membership, who shall be members of the General Assembly.

§ 30-456. Quorum; meetings; voting on recommendations.

A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. The meetings of the Commission shall be held at the call of the chair or whenever the majority of the members so request.

No recommendation of the Commission shall be adopted if a majority of the House members or a majority of the Senate members appointed to the Commission (i) vote against the recommendation and (ii) vote for the recommendation to fail notwithstanding the majority vote of the Commission.

§ 30-457. Compensation; expenses.

Legislative members of the Commission shall receive such compensation as provided in § 30-19.12, and nonlegislative citizen members shall receive such compensation for the performance of their duties as provided in § 2.2-2813. All members shall be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as provided in §§ 2.2-2813 and 2.2-2825. Compensation to members of the

INTRODUCED

HB1232

General Assembly for attendance at official meetings of the Commission shall be paid by the offices of the Clerk of the House of Delegates or Clerk of the Senate, as applicable. All other compensation and expenses shall be paid from existing appropriations to the Commission or, if unfunded, shall be approved by the Joint Rules Committee.

§ 30-458. Powers and duties of the Commission.

The Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

1. Study and determine what federal, state, and local laws have been created and used to systemically confiscate Black-owned land, including partition sales, eminent domain, and discriminatory lending practices;

2. Identify the degree of Black land loss in Virginia measured in loss of generational wealth;

3. Identify how practices in assessing tax liens or property fees against deceased landowners in efforts to seize land and the use of intimidation, threats, and corrupt or racist practices used by law enforcement, elected officials, courts, treasurers, developers, and speculators were used to seize Black-owned land;

4. Make recommendations to reform state and local laws to prevent Black land loss; and

5. Determine whether and what form of compensation or relief would be appropriate for any individual harmed by the above or any of his lineal descendants.

§ 30-459. Staffing.

Administrative staff support shall be provided by the Office of the Clerk of the House of Delegates or the Office of the Clerk of the Senate as may be appropriate for the house in which the chair of the Commission serves. The Division of Legislative Services shall provide legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by the Commission.

§ 30-460. Chairman's executive summary of activity and work of the Commission.

The chair shall submit to the General Assembly and the Governor an annual executive summary of the interim activity and work of the Commission no later than the first day of each regular session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

§ 30-461. Sunset.

This chapter shall expire on July 1, 2029.

2. That, for its first year of existence, if the Commission is not funded by a separate appropriation in the appropriation act, the Commission may be funded from the operating budgets of the Clerk of the House of Delegates and the Clerk of the Senate upon the approval of the Joint Rules Committee. If the Commission is not funded by a separate appropriation in the appropriation act for any year thereafter, this chapter shall expire on July 1 of the fiscal year in which the Commission fails to receive such funding.