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HOUSE BILL NO. 918

Offered January 14, 2026

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 17 of Title 45.2 an article numbered 10, consisting of sections numbered 45.2-1735, 45.2-1736, and 45.2-1737, relating to establishment of the Virginia Clean Energy Research and Support Center.

Patron—Sullivan

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 Chapter 17 of Title 45.2 an article numbered 10, consisting of sections numbered 45.2-1735, 45.2-1736, and 45.2-1737, as follows:

Article 10.**Virginia Clean Energy Research and Support Center.****§ 45.2-1735. Virginia Clean Energy Research and Support Center established.**

The Virginia Clean Energy Research and Support Center (the Center) is hereby established as an interdisciplinary study, research, and informational resource for individuals and businesses in the Commonwealth to provide technical assistance and conduct evaluations as outlined in § 45.2-1737, and shall include Christopher Newport University, George Mason University, James Madison University, Longwood University, the University of Mary Washington, Norfolk State University, Old Dominion University, Radford University, the University of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, Virginia Military Institute, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Virginia State University, and The College of William and Mary in Virginia.

§ 45.2-1736. Board of directors; advisory council.

A. The Center shall be governed by a board of directors (the Board), which shall consist of 18 voting members as follows: the executive director of the Center or his designee, the president of Christopher Newport University or his designee, the president of George Mason University or his designee, the president of James Madison University or his designee, the president of Longwood University or his designee, the president of the University of Mary Washington or his designee, the president of Norfolk State University or his designee, the president of Old Dominion University or his designee, the president of Radford University or his designee, the president of the University of Virginia or his designee, the president of Virginia Commonwealth University or his designee, the Superintendent of Virginia Military Institute or his designee, the president of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University or his designee, the president of Virginia State University or his designee, the president of The College of William and Mary in Virginia or his designee, the Director of the Department or his designee, the Director of the Department of Environmental Quality or his designee, and the executive director of the Commission on Electric Utility Regulation or his designee.

B. The Board shall appoint an executive director to serve as the principal administrative officer of the Center. The executive director shall report to the Board and be under its supervision. The executive director shall employ such personnel and secure such office location and services as may be required to carry out the purposes of the Center, expend appropriated funds, and accept moneys from federal or private sources for carrying out the purposes of the Center.

C. The Board and executive director shall establish an advisory council to provide expertise and guidance on (i) energy research and technical assistance; (ii) opportunities for funding, partnerships, and collaboration; and (iii) the functions of the Center.

§ 45.2-1737. Functions, powers, and duties of the Center; annual evaluation and report.

A. The Center shall serve as an interdisciplinary study, research, and information resource for individuals and businesses in the Commonwealth and shall provide technical assistance to state agencies, planning district commissions, localities, other public bodies, and individuals and businesses in the Commonwealth in matters related to energy technologies, siting of energy facilities, permitting processes, project design, interconnection procedures, generation and transmission infrastructure, coordination with electric utilities, electric utility ratepayer proceedings, and any provision of law regarding environmental impacts of energy generation, distribution, or transmission in the Commonwealth. Upon the request of any planning district commission, the Center shall provide technical assistance, research, or support in developing its comprehensive energy plan.

B. The Center shall conduct an annual evaluation relating to current and proposed interconnection requests and procedures in the Commonwealth, including matters related to siting of energy facilities, permitting processes, resource development, financing, energy efficiency, economic development impacts,

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HB918

59 *supply chains and manufacturing, and innovation, and any other topics deemed necessary by the Center to*
60 *advance the clean energy goals of the Commonwealth.*

61 *C. The Center shall collaborate with the Department, the Department of Environmental Quality, the*
62 *Commission on Electric Utility Regulation, and any other state agency or public institution of higher*
63 *education to provide technical assistance, research, and support for:*

64 *1. Coordinating interdisciplinary research on topics related to energy;*

65 *2. Gathering reliable data, conducting analysis, and disseminating information to inform policies related*
66 *to energy and the implementation of such policies;*

67 *3. Developing and implementing recommendations related to siting of energy facilities, permitting*
68 *processes, and programs to improve the reliability of the electric grid in the Commonwealth;*

69 *4. Project development related to state or federally funded energy programs established at any*
70 *participating public institution of higher education;*

71 *5. Implementing and administering the Virginia Energy Plan (§ 45.2-1710 et seq.).*

72 *D. The Center shall provide an annual report to the Commission on Electric Utility Regulation*
73 *summarizing its research activities and detailing each source and specific amounts of any funding received*
74 *by the Center during the preceding year by November 1 of each year.*