

SUPPORT HB 208 & SB595

Topic: Creating Healthy Communities during Comprehensive Planning Bill
Patron: Del. Simonds & Sen. Bagby

OVERVIEW:

Authorizes localities, beginning July 1, 2024, to adopt a healthy communities strategy as part of its next and any subsequent reviews of the comprehensive plan. This bill would allow local governments the option of taking a wide variety of environmental health impacts into account during their comprehensive planning process, including identifying major sources of pollution, air and water quality, flooding and urban heat exposure, access to healthy food, greenspace and much more. Due to Virginia's status as a Dillon Rule state, localities have not yet been given specific authority to include these initiatives in their comprehensive plans.

Reasons to Support:

- The most critical factor in your health is the environment around you; this bill would allow local governments to plan around community health
- Communities across the Commonwealth could benefit from this bill
 - Innovative approaches could be considered including:
 - Access to broadband internet
 - Increased job training
 - Creating opportunities to age in place with smart design
- There is an opportunity to increase public engagement around comprehensive planning for localities
- Low income qualified households often are situated in environmentally unhealthy areas, this bill would allow for increased protections from environmental and health hazards



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