

080045472

HOUSE BILL NO. 228

Offered January 9, 2008

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A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Title 59.1 a chapter numbered 23.1, consisting of sections numbered 59.1-293.1 through 59.1-293.9, relating to the sale of fire-safe cigarettes; civil penalties.

Patron—Cosgrove

Referred to Committee on Commerce and Labor

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Title 59.1 a chapter numbered 23.1, consisting of sections numbered 59.1-293.1 through 59.1-293.9, as follows:

CHAPTER 23.1.

FIRE-SAFE CIGARETTES.

§ 59.1-293.1. Definitions.

As used in this chapter:

"Cigarette" has the same meaning ascribed thereto in § 58.1-1031.

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

"Department" means the Department of Taxation.

"Importer" has the same meaning ascribed thereto in 26 U.S.C. § 5702 (k).

"Manufacturer" means (i) a person who manufactures or otherwise produces, or causes to be manufactured or produced, cigarettes intended for sale in the Commonwealth, including cigarettes intended for sale in the United States through an importer; (ii) the first purchaser anywhere that intends to resell in the United States cigarettes that the original manufacturer or maker does not intend for sale in the United States; or (iii) the successor to a person listed in clause (i) or (ii).

"Package" has the same meaning ascribed thereto in 15 U.S.C. § 1332 (4).

"Quality control and quality assurance program" means laboratory procedures implemented to ensure that operator bias, systematic and nonsystematic methodological errors, and equipment-related problems do not affect the results of the testing, and the testing repeatability remains within the required repeatability value for any test trial used to certify cigarettes under this chapter.

"Repeatability" means the range of values within which the repeat results of cigarette test trials from a single laboratory will fall 95 percent of the time.

"Retailer" means a person who (i) sells cigarettes to consumers through vending machines on fewer than 40 premises; (ii) otherwise sells cigarettes to consumers; or (iii) holds cigarettes for sale to consumers.

"Vending machine operator" means a person who (i) holds cigarettes for sale to consumers through vending machines on 40 or more premises or (ii) sells cigarettes to consumers through vending machines on 40 or more premises.

"Wholesaler" means a person who (i) holds cigarettes for sale to another person for resale or (ii) sells cigarettes to another person for resale.

§ 59.1-293.2. Testing and certification of cigarettes.

A. Cigarettes may not be manufactured in the Commonwealth or sold or offered for sale to any person in the Commonwealth unless:

1. The cigarettes have been tested in accordance with the test method and meet the performance standard specified in this section;

2. The manufacturer has filed a written certification in accordance with § 59.1-293.3; and

3. The cigarettes have been marked in accordance with § 59.1-293.4.

B. The performance standard for cigarettes sold or offered for sale in the Commonwealth is stated in subdivision E 1.

C. Testing of cigarettes shall be conducted in accordance with the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard E2187-04 "Standard Test Method for Measuring the Ignition Strength of Cigarettes." The Commissioner, in consultation with the State Fire Marshal, may adopt a subsequent ASTM Standard Test Method for Measuring the Ignition Strength of Cigarettes on a finding that the subsequent method does not result in a change in the percentage of full-length burns exhibited by any tested cigarette when compared to the percentage of full-length burns the same cigarette would exhibit when tested in accordance with ASTM standard E2187-04 and the performance standard of this section.

D. Testing of cigarettes shall be conducted on 10 layers of filter paper.

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HB228

59 E. 1. No more than 25 percent of the cigarettes tested in a test trial shall exhibit full-length burns.

60 2. Forty replicate tests shall comprise a complete test trial for each cigarette tested.

61 F. The performance standard required by this section shall only be applied to a complete test trial.

62 G. Written certifications shall be based upon testing conducted by a laboratory that has been
63 accredited pursuant to Standard ISO/IEC 17025 of the International Organization for Standardization or
64 other comparable accreditation standard required by the Commissioner.

65 H. Each laboratory that conducts tests in accordance with this section shall implement a quality
66 control and quality assurance program that includes a procedure to determine the repeatability of the
67 testing results. The repeatability value shall be no greater than 0.19.

68 I. Each cigarette listed in a certification that uses lowered permeability bands in the cigarette paper
69 to achieve compliance with the performance standard of this section shall have at least two nominally
70 identical bands on the paper surrounding the tobacco column. At least one complete band shall be
71 located at least 15 millimeters from the lighting end of the cigarette. For a cigarette on which the bands
72 are positioned by design, at least two bands shall be located at least 15 millimeters from the lighting
73 end and 10 millimeters from the filter end of the tobacco column. For an unfiltered cigarette, the two
74 complete bands shall be located at least 15 millimeters from the lighting end and 10 millimeters from
75 the labeled end of the tobacco column.

76 J. If the Commissioner determines that a cigarette cannot be tested in accordance with the test
77 method required by this section, the manufacturer of the cigarette shall propose to the Commissioner a
78 test method and performance standard for that cigarette. The Commissioner, in consultation with the
79 State Fire Marshal, may approve a test method and performance standard that the Commissioner
80 determines is equivalent to the requirements of this section, and the manufacturer may use that test
81 method and performance standard for certification in accordance with § 59.1-293.3. If the Commissioner
82 determines that another state has enacted reduced cigarette ignition propensity standards that include a
83 test method and performance standard that are the same as those contained in this chapter, and the
84 Commissioner finds that the officials responsible for implementing those requirements have approved the
85 proposed alternative test method and performance standard for a particular cigarette proposed by a
86 manufacturer as meeting the reduced cigarette ignition propensity standards of that state's law or
87 regulation under a legal provision comparable to this section, then the Commissioner shall authorize
88 that manufacturer to employ the alternative test method and performance standard to certify that
89 cigarette for sale in the Commonwealth, unless the Commissioner demonstrates a reasonable basis why
90 the alternative test should not be accepted under this chapter. All other applicable requirements of this
91 section shall apply to the manufacturer.

92 K. This section does not require additional testing for cigarettes that are tested in a manner
93 consistent with the requirements of this section for any other purpose.

94 L. Each manufacturer shall maintain copies of the reports of all tests conducted on all cigarettes
95 offered for sale for a period of three years, and shall make copies of these reports available to the
96 Commissioner, State Fire Marshal, and the Attorney General on written request. Any manufacturer who
97 fails to make copies of these reports available within 60 days of receiving a written request shall be
98 subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$10,000 for each day after the 60th day that the manufacturer
99 does not make such copies available.

100 M. Testing performed or sponsored by the Commissioner to determine a cigarette's compliance with
101 the performance standard required by this section shall be conducted in accordance with this section.

102 N. The requirements of subsection A shall not prohibit:

103 1. Wholesalers or retailers from selling their existing inventory of cigarettes on or after the effective
104 date of this chapter if the wholesaler or retailer can establish that state tax stamps were affixed to the
105 cigarettes prior to the effective date and the wholesaler or retailer can establish that the inventory was
106 purchased prior to the effective date in comparable quantity to the inventory purchased during the same
107 period of the prior year; or

108 2. The sale of cigarettes solely for the purpose of consumer testing. For purposes of this paragraph,
109 the term "consumer testing" shall mean an assessment of cigarettes that is conducted by a manufacturer,
110 or under the control and direction of a manufacturer, for the purpose of evaluating consumer
111 acceptance of such cigarettes, utilizing only the quantity of cigarettes that is reasonably necessary for
112 such assessment, and in a controlled setting where the cigarettes are either consumed on-site or
113 returned to the testing administrators at the conclusion of the testing.

114 § 59.1-293.3. Certification of cigarette testing.

115 A. Each manufacturer shall submit on request to the Commissioner written certification attesting that
116 each cigarette has been tested in accordance with and has met the performance standard required under
117 § 59.1-293.2.

118 B. The description of each cigarette listed in the certification shall include:

119 1. The brand;

120 2. The style;

- 121 3. The length in millimeters;
- 122 4. The circumference in millimeters;
- 123 5. The flavor, if applicable;
- 124 6. Whether filter or nonfilter;
- 125 7. A package description, such as soft pack or box;
- 126 8. The mark approved in accordance with § 59.1-293.4;
- 127 9. The name, address, and telephone number of the laboratory, if different than the manufacturer
- 128 that conducted the test; and
- 129 10. The date that the testing occurred.
- 130 C. On request, the certification shall be made available to the Attorney General, the Commissioner,
- 131 and the State Fire Marshal.
- 132 D. Each cigarette certified under this section shall be recertified every three years.
- 133 E. If a manufacturer has certified a cigarette pursuant to this section, and thereafter makes any
- 134 change to such cigarette that is likely to alter its compliance with the reduced cigarette ignition
- 135 propensity standards mandated by this chapter, then before such cigarette may be sold or offered for
- 136 sale in the Commonwealth such manufacturer shall retest such cigarette in accordance with the testing
- 137 standards prescribed in § 59.1-293.2 and maintain records of such retesting as required by § 59.1-293.2.
- 138 Any such altered cigarette that does not meet the performance standard set forth in § 59.1-293.2 may
- 139 not be sold in the Commonwealth.
- 140 F. For each brand style of cigarette listed in a certification, a manufacturer shall pay a fee in the
- 141 amount of \$250; however, the Commissioner is authorized to adjust the amount of the fee annually to
- 142 ensure that the amount collected therefrom defrays the actual costs of the processing, testing,
- 143 enforcement and oversight activities required by this chapter. The fees assessed under the provisions of
- 144 this chapter shall be paid into the state treasury and shall be deposited into a special fund designated
- 145 "Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Fire-Safe Cigarette Fund." One half of the moneys
- 146 deposited into the special fund and one half of the unexpended balance thereof shall be appropriated for
- 147 use by the Commissioner to conduct the processing, testing, enforcement, and oversight activities
- 148 required by this chapter, and such expenditures from the special fund shall be made by the State
- 149 Treasurer on warrants issued by the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Commissioner. The
- 150 other half of the moneys deposited into the special fund and the unexpended balance thereof shall be
- 151 appropriated to the Department of Fire Programs for use by the State Fire Marshal pursuant to
- 152 § 9.1-206 in carrying out the provisions of the Statewide Fire Prevention Code Act (§ 27-94 et seq.),
- 153 and such expenditures from the special fund shall be made by the State Treasurer on warrants issued by
- 154 the Comptroller upon written request signed by the Executive Director of Fire Programs.
- 155 § 59.1-293.4. Marking of cigarettes.
- 156 A. Cigarettes that have been certified in accordance with § 59.1-293.3 shall be marked in
- 157 accordance with the requirements of this section.
- 158 B. The marking shall:
- 159 1. Be in a font of at least eight-point type; and
- 160 2. Include one of the following:
- 161 a. Modification of the product UPC code to include a visible mark that is printed at or around the
- 162 area of the UPC code and consists of one or more alphanumeric or symbolic characters permanently
- 163 stamped, engraved, embossed, or printed in conjunction with the UPC code;
- 164 b. Any visible combination of alphanumeric or symbolic characters permanently stamped, engraved,
- 165 embossed, or printed on the cigarette package or the cellophane wrap; or
- 166 c. Stamped, engraved, embossed, or printed text that indicates that the cigarettes meet the standards
- 167 of this chapter.
- 168 C. The manufacturer shall request approval of a proposed marking from the Commissioner.
- 169 D. The Commissioner shall approve or disapprove the marking offered, except that the Commissioner
- 170 shall approve:
- 171 1. The letters "FSC," which signify Fire Standards Compliant, appearing in eight-point type or
- 172 larger and permanently printed, stamped, engraved, or embossed on the package at or near the UPC
- 173 code; and
- 174 2. Any marking in use and approved for sale in New York pursuant to the New York fire safety
- 175 standards for cigarettes.
- 176 E. A marking is deemed approved if the Commissioner fails to act within 30 days after receiving a
- 177 request for approval.
- 178 F. A manufacturer may not use a modified marking unless the modification has been approved in
- 179 accordance with this section.
- 180 G. A manufacturer shall use only one marking on all brands that the manufacturer markets.
- 181 H. A marking or modified marking approved by the Commissioner shall be applied uniformly on all

182 brands marketed and on all packages, including packs, cartons, and cases marketed by that
183 manufacturer.

184 § 59.1-293.5. Provision of copies of certifications and illustration of the packaging markings;
185 inspections.

186 A. Each manufacturer shall:

187 1. Provide a copy of each certification to each wholesaler to which the manufacturer sells cigarettes;
188 and

189 2. Provide sufficient copies of an illustration of the packaging marking approved and used by the
190 manufacturer in accordance with § 59.1-293.4 for each retailer and vending machine operator who
191 purchases cigarettes from the wholesaler.

192 B. The wholesaler shall provide a copy of the illustration to each retailer and vending machine
193 operator to whom the wholesaler sells cigarettes.

194 C. Each retailer, vending machine operator, and wholesaler shall allow the Commissioner or
195 designee of the Commissioner to inspect the markings on cigarette packaging at any time.

196 § 59.1-293.6. Nonconforming cigarettes.

197 A. Any cigarettes that have been sold or offered for sale that do not comply with the performance
198 standard required by § 59.1-293.2 shall be deemed contraband and subject to forfeiture and disposal by
199 the Commonwealth; however, prior to the destruction of any cigarettes forfeited pursuant to this
200 subsection, the true holder of the trademark rights in the cigarette brand shall be permitted to inspect
201 such cigarettes.

202 B. The Department in the regular course of conducting inspections of retailers and wholesalers may
203 inspect cigarettes to determine if the cigarettes are marked as required by § 59.1-293.4. If the cigarettes
204 are not marked as required, the Department shall notify the Commissioner.

205 C. Whenever law-enforcement personnel or a duly authorized representative of the Commissioner
206 shall discover any cigarettes that have not been marked in the manner required by § 59.1-293.4, such
207 personnel are hereby authorized and empowered to seize and take possession of such cigarettes. Such
208 cigarettes shall be turned over to the Department and shall be forfeited to the Commonwealth.
209 Cigarettes seized pursuant to this section shall be destroyed; however, prior to the destruction of any
210 cigarette seized pursuant to this subsection, the true holder of the trademark rights in the cigarette
211 brand shall be permitted to inspect the cigarette.

212 § 59.1-293.7. Powers of Commissioner; regulation and implementation.

213 The Commissioner:

214 1. May adopt regulations necessary to carry out and administer this chapter;

215 2. In consultation with the State Fire Marshal, may adopt regulations for the conduct of random
216 inspections of retailers, vending machine operators, and wholesalers to ensure compliance with this
217 chapter; and

218 3. Shall ensure that the implementation and substance of this chapter is in accordance with the
219 implementation and substance of the New York fire safety standards for cigarettes.

220 § 59.1-293.8. Enforcement; civil penalties.

221 A. A manufacturer or other person who knowingly sells or offers for sale cigarettes other than by
222 retail sale in violation of § 59.1-293.2 shall be subject to a civil penalty not exceeding \$100 for each
223 such pack of cigarettes sold or offered for sale, provided that in no case shall the civil penalty assessed
224 against any such person exceed \$100,000 for sales or offers for sale during any 30-day period.

225 B. A retailer who knowingly sells cigarettes in violation of § 59.1-293.2 shall be subject to a civil
226 penalty not exceeding \$100 for each pack of such cigarettes sold or offered for sale, provided that in no
227 case shall the civil penalty assessed against any retailer exceed \$25,000 for sales or offers for sale
228 during any 30-day period.

229 C. Any person who violates any other provision of this chapter shall be subject to a civil penalty of
230 not more than \$1,000 for the first violation. The civil penalty for each subsequent violation shall not
231 exceed \$5,000.

232 D. A manufacturer who knowingly makes a false certification under § 59.1-293.3 shall be subject to
233 a civil penalty of at least \$75,000 and not exceeding \$250,000 for each false certification.

234 E. A civil penalty may be assessed by the Commissioner only after the Commissioner has given the
235 manufacturer charged with making such a false certification an opportunity for a public hearing. Where
236 such a public hearing has been held, the Commissioner shall make findings of fact and issue a written
237 decision as to the occurrence of the violation and the amount of the penalty that is warranted,
238 incorporating, when appropriate, an order therein requiring that the penalty be paid. Any hearing under
239 this section shall be a formal adjudicatory hearing in accordance with the Administrative Process Act
240 (§ 2.2-4000 et seq.). When the person charged with such a violation fails to avail himself of the
241 opportunity for a public hearing, a civil penalty shall be assessed by the Commissioner after the
242 Commissioner determines that a violation has occurred and the amount of the penalty warranted and
243 issues an order requiring that the penalty be paid.

244 *F. The Commissioner may collect civil penalties that are owed in the same manner as provided by*
245 *law in respect to judgment of a court of record. Such civil penalties shall be paid into the Department*
246 *of Agriculture and Consumer Services Fire-Safe Cigarette Fund referenced in subsection F of*
247 *§ 59.1-293.3 and distributed as provided therein.*

248 *§ 59.1-293.9. Application of chapter to certain cigarettes; conflicting local ordinances preempted.*

249 *A. Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to prohibit any person from manufacturing or selling*
250 *cigarettes that do not meet the requirements of this chapter if the cigarettes are stamped for sale in*
251 *another state or are to be sold outside the United States.*

252 *B. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a locality may neither enact nor enforce any*
253 *ordinance or other local law or regulation that conflicts with, or is inconsistent with, any provision of*
254 *this chapter.*

255 **2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on the first day of the 13th month**
256 **following its enactment.**

257 **3. That the provisions of this act shall expire on the effective date of any federal law that**
258 **implements a reduced cigarette ignition propensity standard, which law preempts the provisions of**
259 **the first enactment of this act.**

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HB228