

2023 Virginia General Assembly Legislative Wrap-Up

Description

During the 2023 session VLTA focused most of our efforts on the bills below:

HB 2184 was patroned by Delegate Carrie Coyner and is the result of extensive negotiations between VLTA and the Creditor's Bar throughout 2022. HB 2184 will allow settlement agents to release judgement liens under certain circumstances and with due diligence to find the judgement creditor having been exercised. This bill has passed the General Assembly and is awaiting the Governor's signature or his amendments.

HB 1888 was patroned by Delegate Rip Sullivan and seeks to limit the alleged practice of some settlement agents charging fees to the seller that are either inflated or not necessary. VLTA held extensive talks with both Delegate Sullivan and Delegate Simon regarding the issue. The bill was buoyed by the support of the Virginian Association of Realtors after their members began contacting legislators in support of the bill. HB 1888 requires that in cases where the seller is represented by an attorney, that attorney must sign off on all fees to be charged to the seller. This bill passed the General Assembly and is awaiting action by the Governor.

HB 2325 and SB 1438 are identical bills (patroned by Delegate Bloxom and Senator Stuart) which seek to prohibit the sale or transfer of agricultural land to a foreign adversary of the United States. These are two of seventy-five bills that have been filed across the country. These bills would void any sale or transfer of agricultural land by or to a foreign adversary. Though there are several issues with these bills, the void provision is extremely problematic. VLTA believes that if the bill is signed into law as is underwriters will refuse to write title insurance for the sale of agricultural land in Virginia. VLTA has been working with several other groups (Virginia Association of Realtors, Virginia Bankers Association, the Real Estate Section of the Bar, Virginia Farm Bureau, Farm Credit of Virginia, and the Virginia Agri-Business Council) to encourage the Governor to amend these bills. On March 7th VLTA and several of the groups mentioned above met with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of Agriculture and the Governor's Policy Office. We will keep you apprised of our progress.

What's Next?

The reconvene session will be held on April 12th. This is where the General Assembly acts on the Governor's amendments and vetoes to pieces of legislation. Primaries for the House and Senate will be in early June with the general elections to be held in the first week of November. We will keep you updated on the above issues as they develop. Please let us know if you have questions or would like more information.

**James Pickral**

Founding Partner, has more than two decades of experience in government affairs- with a focus on legislative and regulatory health care issues. He has worked with clients in the economic development, renewable and alternative energy, and pharmaceutical industries. James previously served as Manager of State Government Affairs for Troutman Sanders Strategies and the Director of Policy for the Virginia Pharmacists Association. James spent three legislative sessions as Legislative Assistant to Delegate John Oâ??Bannon. James is a veteran of the United States Army, serving as an infantryman during Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm and Provide Comfort. After his military service, James received his Bachelor of Arts in History from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is an active member of Saint Benedictâ??s Catholic Church and VFW Post 6364. He formerly served on St. Benedict Churchâ??s parish finance council and on the school board for Saint Benedict Catholic School. James and his wife have three daughters and live in Richmond.

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