2017 Session

Budget Bill - HB1500 (Chapter 836)

Item 4-5.02

§ 4-5.02 THIRD PARTY TRANSACTIONS

a. EMPLOYMENT OF ATTORNEYS:

1.a) All attorneys authorized by this act to be employed by any state agency and all attorneys compensated out of any moneys appropriated in this session of the General Assembly shall be appointed by the Attorney General and be in all respects subject to the provisions of Title 2.2, Chapter 5, Code of Virginia, to the extent not to conflict with Title 12.1, Chapter 4, Code of Virginia; provided, however, that if the Governor certifies the need for independent legal counsel for any Executive Department agency, such agency shall be free to act independently of the Office of the Attorney General in regard to selection, and provided, further, that compensation of such independent legal counsel shall be paid from the moneys appropriated to such Executive Department agency or from the moneys appropriated to the Office of the Attorney General.

b) For purposes of this act, "attorney" shall be defined as an employee or contractor who represents an agency before a court, board or agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia or political subdivision thereof. This term shall not include members of the bar employed by an agency who perform in a capacity that does not require a license to practice law, including but not limited to, instructing, managing, supervising or performing normal or customary duties of that agency.

2. This section does not apply to attorneys employed by state agencies in the Legislative Department, Judicial Department or Independent Agencies.

3. Reporting on employment of attorneys shall be in accordance with § 4-8.00, Reporting Requirements.

4. Notwithstanding § 2.2-510.1 of the Code of Virginia and any other conflicting provision of law, the Virginia Retirement System may enter into agreements to seek *i)* recovery of investment losses in foreign jurisdictions*, and ii) legal advice related to its investments*. Any such agreements shall be reported to the Office of the Attorney General as soon as practicable.

b. STUDIES AND CONSULTATIVE SERVICES REQUIRED BY GENERAL ASSEMBLY: No expenditure for payments on third party nongovernmental contracts for studies or consultative services shall be made out of any appropriation to the General Assembly or to any study group created by the General Assembly, nor shall any such expenditure for third party nongovernmental contracts be made by any Executive Department agency in response to a legislative request for a study, without the prior approval of two of the following persons: the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee; the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee; the Speaker of the House of Delegates; the President pro tempore of the Senate. All such expenditures shall be made only in accordance with the terms of a written contract approved as to form by the Attorney General.

c. USE OF CONSULTING SERVICES: All state agencies and institutions of higher education shall make a determination of "return on investment" as part of the criteria for awarding contracts for consulting services.

d. DEBT COLLECTION SERVICES:

1. Notwithstanding any provision of the Code of Virginia or this act to the contrary, the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System Authority shall have the option to participate in the Office of the Attorney General's debt collection process. Should the Authority choose not to participate, the Authority shall have the authority to collect its accounts receivable by engaging private collection agents and attorneys to pursue collection actions, and to independently compromise, settle, and discharge accounts receivable claims.

2. Notwithstanding any provision of the Code of Virginia or this act to the contrary, the University of Virginia Medical Center shall have the authority to collect its accounts receivable by engaging private collection agents and attorneys to pursue collection actions, and to independently compromise, settle, and discharge accounts receivable claims, provided that the University of Virginia demonstrates to the Secretary of Finance that debt collection by an agent other than the Office of the Attorney General is anticipated to be more cost effective. Nothing in this paragraph is intended to limit the ability of the University of Virginia Medical Center from voluntarily contracting with the Office of the Attorney General's Division of Debt Collection in cases where the Center would benefit from the expertise of legal counsel and collection services offered by the Office of the Attorney General.

3. Notwithstanding any provision of the Code of Virginia or this act to the contrary, the Department of Taxation shall be exempt from participating in the debt collection process of the Office of the Attorney General.