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SUPPORT HB1722

Patron: Delegate Simonds

A bill to prohibit the use of cyanide in mineral mining and processing.

Quick Points:

- Forward looking and protective rather than reactive and restrictive
- Protects Virginia's water from cyanide contamination
- Responds to recommendations made by National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine after studying potential impacts of gold mining in Virginia
 - Specifically: "Virginia's regulations are insufficient to protect against the potential impacts of gold mining"

Background:

- In 2022, the Commonwealth studied the potential impacts of gold mining. The study report, approved by Governor Youngkin, states that Virginia's regulations are insufficient to protect against those impacts.
- Of the impacts studied, of most concern were the impacts to Virginia's ground and surface water.
- Cyanide spills in mining are common and result in ruined drinking water, the destruction of ecosystems, and massive fish kills.
- Negative impacts to ground and surface water are more likely with the use of cyanide processing.