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HOUSE BILL NO. 2796

Offered January 17, 2005

A *BILL to amend and reenact § 32.1-73.7 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 37.1-24.001, relating to suicide prevention across the lifespan.*

Patrons—Baskerville and Amundson

Referred to Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

1. That § 32.1-73.7 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted, and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 37.1-24.001 as follows:

§ 32.1-73.7. Department to be lead agency for youth suicide prevention.

With such funds as may be appropriated for this purpose, the Department, in consultation with the Department of Education, the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, community services boards and behavioral health authorities, and local departments of health, shall have the lead responsibility for the youth suicide prevention program within the Commonwealth. This responsibility includes coordination of the activities of the agencies of the Commonwealth pertaining to youth suicide prevention in order to develop and carry out comprehensive youth suicide prevention plans and strategies addressing the promotion of health development, early identification, crisis intervention, and support to survivors. The plans and strategies shall be targeted to the specific needs of children and adolescents. The Department shall cooperate with federal, state and local agencies, private and public agencies, survivor groups and other interested individuals in order to prevent youth suicide within the Commonwealth. The Department shall report annually by December 1 of each year to the Governor and the General Assembly on its youth suicide prevention activities.

The provisions of this section shall not limit the powers and duties of other state agencies submit the comprehensive youth suicide prevention strategies to the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services annually for inclusion in the report on suicide prevention activities to the Governor and General Assembly, pursuant to § 37.1-24.001.

§ 37.1-24.001. Department to be lead agency for suicide prevention across the lifespan.

With such funds as may be appropriated for this purpose, the Department, in consultation with the community services boards and behavioral health authorities, the Department of Health, local departments of health, and the Department for the Aging, shall have the lead responsibility for the suicide prevention across the lifespan program within the Commonwealth. This responsibility includes coordination of the activities of the agencies of the Commonwealth pertaining to suicide prevention in order to develop and carry out a comprehensive suicide prevention plan addressing public awareness, the promotion of health development, early identification, intervention and treatment, support to survivors, and surveillance. The Department shall cooperate with federal, state, and local agencies, private and public agencies, survivor groups, and other interested individuals in order to prevent suicide within the Commonwealth. The Department shall report annually by December 1 of each year to the Governor and the General Assembly on its suicide prevention activities.

The provisions of this section shall not limit the powers and duties of other state agencies. The Department of Health shall continue to be responsible for youth suicide prevention strategies as provided in § 32.1-73.7.

INTRODUCED

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