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SENATE BILL NO. 1028

Offered January 14, 2009

Prefiled January 13, 2009

A BILL to amend and reenact § 63.2-100 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the definition of adult neglect; exemption for religious treatment.

Patrons—Hanger and Puller

Referred to Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 63.2-100 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 63.2-100. Definitions.

As used in this title, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Abused or neglected child" means any child less than 18 years of age:

1. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care creates or inflicts, threatens to create or inflict, or allows to be created or inflicted upon such child a physical or mental injury by other than accidental means, or creates a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of bodily or mental functions, including but not limited to, a child who is with his parent or other person responsible for his care either (i) during the manufacture or attempted manufacture of a Schedule I or II controlled substance, or (ii) during the unlawful sale of such substance by that child's parents or other person responsible for his care, where such manufacture, or attempted manufacture or unlawful sale would constitute a felony violation of § 18.2-248;

2. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care neglects or refuses to provide care necessary for his health. However, no child who in good faith is under treatment solely by spiritual means through prayer in accordance with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination shall for that reason alone be considered to be an abused or neglected child. Further, a decision by parents who have legal authority for the child or, in the absence of parents with legal authority for the child, any person with legal authority for the child, who refuses a particular medical treatment for a child with a life-threatening condition shall not be deemed a refusal to provide necessary care if (i) such decision is made jointly by the parents or other person with legal authority and the child; (ii) the child has reached 14 years of age and is sufficiently mature to have an informed opinion on the subject of his medical treatment; (iii) the parents or other person with legal authority and the child have considered alternative treatment options; and (iv) the parents or other person with legal authority and the child believe in good faith that such decision is in the child's best interest. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to limit the provisions of § 16.1-278.4;

3. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care abandons such child;

4. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care commits or allows to be committed any act of sexual exploitation or any sexual act upon a child in violation of the law;

5. Who is without parental care or guardianship caused by the unreasonable absence or the mental or physical incapacity of the child's parent, guardian, legal custodian or other person standing in loco parentis; or

6. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care creates a substantial risk of physical or mental injury by knowingly leaving the child alone in the same dwelling, including an apartment as defined in § 55-79.2, with a person to whom the child is not related by blood or marriage and who the parent or other person responsible for his care knows has been convicted of an offense against a minor for which registration is required as a violent sexual offender pursuant to § 9.1-902.

If a civil proceeding under this title is based solely on the parent having left the child at a hospital or rescue squad, it shall be an affirmative defense that such parent safely delivered the child to a hospital that provides 24-hour emergency services or to an attended rescue squad that employs emergency medical technicians, within 14 days of the child's birth. For purposes of terminating parental rights pursuant to § 16.1-283 and placement for adoption, the court may find such a child is a neglected child upon the ground of abandonment.

"Adoptive home" means any family home selected and approved by a parent, local board or a licensed child-placing agency for the placement of a child with the intent of adoption.

"Adoptive placement" means arranging for the care of a child who is in the custody of a child-placing agency in an approved home for the purpose of adoption.

"Adult abuse" means the willful infliction of physical pain, injury or mental anguish or unreasonable confinement of an adult.

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SB1028

59 "Adult day care center" means any facility that is either operated for profit or that desires licensure
60 and that provides supplementary care and protection during only a part of the day to four or more aged,
61 infirm or disabled adults who reside elsewhere, except (i) a facility or portion of a facility licensed by
62 the State Board of Health or the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse
63 Services, and (ii) the home or residence of an individual who cares for only persons related to him by
64 blood or marriage. Included in this definition are any two or more places, establishments or institutions
65 owned, operated or controlled by a single entity and providing such supplementary care and protection
66 to a combined total of four or more aged, infirm or disabled adults.

67 "Adult exploitation" means the illegal use of an incapacitated adult or his resources for another's
68 profit or advantage.

69 "Adult foster care" means room and board, supervision, and special services to an adult who has a
70 physical or mental condition. Adult foster care may be provided by a single provider for up to three
71 adults.

72 "Adult neglect" means that an adult is living under such circumstances that he is not able to provide
73 for himself or is not being provided services necessary to maintain his physical and mental health and
74 that the failure to receive such necessary services impairs or threatens to impair his well-being.
75 *However, no adult shall be considered neglected solely on the basis that such adult is receiving*
76 *religious nonmedical treatment or religious nonmedical nursing care in lieu of medical care, provided*
77 *that such treatment or care is performed in good faith and in accordance with the religious practices of*
78 *the adult or there is a written or oral expression of consent for that adult.*

79 "Adult protective services" means services provided by the local department that are necessary to
80 protect an adult from abuse, neglect or exploitation.

81 "Assisted living care" means a level of service provided by an assisted living facility for adults who
82 may have physical or mental impairments and require at least a moderate level of assistance with
83 activities of daily living.

84 "Assisted living facility" means any congregate residential setting that provides or coordinates
85 personal and health care services, 24-hour supervision, and assistance (scheduled and unscheduled) for
86 the maintenance or care of four or more adults who are aged, infirm or disabled and who are cared for
87 in a primarily residential setting, except (i) a facility or portion of a facility licensed by the State Board
88 of Health or the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, but
89 including any portion of such facility not so licensed; (ii) the home or residence of an individual who
90 cares for or maintains only persons related to him by blood or marriage; (iii) a facility or portion of a
91 facility serving infirm or disabled persons between the ages of 18 and 21, or 22 if enrolled in an
92 educational program for the handicapped pursuant to § 22.1-214, when such facility is licensed by the
93 Department as a children's residential facility under Chapter 17 (§ 63.2-1700 et seq.) of this title, but
94 including any portion of the facility not so licensed; and (iv) any housing project for persons 62 years of
95 age or older or the disabled that provides no more than basic coordination of care services and is funded
96 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, or
97 by the Virginia Housing Development Authority. Included in this definition are any two or more places,
98 establishments or institutions owned or operated by a single entity and providing maintenance or care to
99 a combined total of four or more aged, infirm or disabled adults. Maintenance or care means the
100 protection, general supervision and oversight of the physical and mental well-being of an aged, infirm or
101 disabled individual.

102 "Auxiliary grants" means cash payments made to certain aged, blind or disabled individuals who
103 receive benefits under Title XVI of the Social Security Act, as amended, or would be eligible to receive
104 these benefits except for excess income.

105 "Birth family" or "birth sibling" means the child's biological family or biological sibling.

106 "Birth parent" means the child's biological parent and, for purposes of adoptive placement, means
107 parent(s) by previous adoption.

108 "Board" means the State Board of Social Services.

109 "Child" means any natural person under 18 years of age.

110 "Child day center" means a child day program offered to (i) two or more children under the age of
111 13 in a facility that is not the residence of the provider or of any of the children in care or (ii) 13 or
112 more children at any location.

113 "Child day program" means a regularly operating service arrangement for children where, during the
114 absence of a parent or guardian, a person or organization has agreed to assume responsibility for the
115 supervision, protection, and well-being of a child under the age of 13 for less than a 24-hour period.

116 "Child-placing agency" means any person who places children in foster homes, adoptive homes or
117 independent living arrangements pursuant to § 63.2-1819 or a local board that places children in foster
118 homes or adoptive homes pursuant to §§ 63.2-900, 63.2-903, and 63.2-1221. Officers, employees, or
119 agents of the Commonwealth, or any locality acting within the scope of their authority as such, who
120 serve as or maintain a child-placing agency, shall not be required to be licensed.

"Child-protective services" means the identification, receipt and immediate response to complaints and reports of alleged child abuse or neglect for children under 18 years of age. It also includes assessment, and arranging for and providing necessary protective and rehabilitative services for a child and his family when the child has been found to have been abused or neglected or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

"Child support services" means any civil, criminal or administrative action taken by the Division of Child Support Enforcement to locate parents; establish paternity; and establish, modify, enforce, or collect child support, or child and spousal support.

"Child-welfare agency" means a child day center, child-placing agency, children's residential facility, family day home, family day system, or independent foster home.

"Children's residential facility" means any facility, child-caring institution, or group home that is maintained for the purpose of receiving children separated from their parents or guardians for full-time care, maintenance, protection and guidance, or for the purpose of providing independent living services to persons between 18 and 21 years of age who are in the process of transitioning out of foster care. Children's residential facility shall not include:

1. A licensed or accredited educational institution whose pupils, in the ordinary course of events, return annually to the homes of their parents or guardians for not less than two months of summer vacation;

2. An establishment required to be licensed as a summer camp by § 35.1-18; and

3. A licensed or accredited hospital legally maintained as such.

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Department, his designee or authorized representative.

"Department" means the State Department of Social Services.

"Department of Health and Human Services" means the Department of Health and Human Services of the United States government or any department or agency thereof that may hereafter be designated as the agency to administer the Social Security Act, as amended.

"Disposable income" means that part of the income due and payable of any individual remaining after the deduction of any amount required by law to be withheld.

"Energy assistance" means benefits to assist low-income households with their home heating and cooling needs, including, but not limited to, purchase of materials or substances used for home heating, repair or replacement of heating equipment, emergency intervention in no-heat situations, purchase or repair of cooling equipment, and payment of electric bills to operate cooling equipment, in accordance with § 63.2-805, or provided under the Virginia Energy Assistance Program established pursuant to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (Title XXVI of Public Law 97-35), as amended.

"Family day home" means a child day program offered in the residence of the provider or the home of any of the children in care for one through 12 children under the age of 13, exclusive of the provider's own children and any children who reside in the home, when at least one child receives care for compensation. The provider of a licensed or registered family day home shall disclose to the parents or guardians of children in their care the percentage of time per week that persons other than the provider will care for the children. Family day homes serving six through 12 children, exclusive of the provider's own children and any children who reside in the home, shall be licensed. However, no family day home shall care for more than four children under the age of two, including the provider's own children and any children who reside in the home, unless the family day home is licensed or voluntarily registered. However, a family day home where the children in care are all grandchildren of the provider shall not be required to be licensed.

"Family day system" means any person who approves family day homes as members of its system; who refers children to available family day homes in that system; and who, through contractual arrangement, may provide central administrative functions including, but not limited to, training of operators of member homes; technical assistance and consultation to operators of member homes; inspection, supervision, monitoring, and evaluation of member homes; and referral of children to available health and social services.

"Foster care placement" means placement of a child through (i) an agreement between the parents or guardians and the local board or the public agency designated by the community policy and management team where legal custody remains with the parents or guardians or (ii) an entrustment or commitment of the child to the local board or licensed child-placing agency.

"Foster home" means the place of residence of any natural person in which any child, other than a child by birth or adoption of such person, resides as a member of the household.

"General relief" means money payments and other forms of relief made to those persons mentioned in § 63.2-802 in accordance with the regulations of the Board and reimbursable in accordance with § 63.2-401.

"Independent foster home" means a private family home in which any child, other than a child by

182 birth or adoption of such person, resides as a member of the household and has been placed therein
183 independently of a child-placing agency except (i) a home in which are received only children related by
184 birth or adoption of the person who maintains such home and children of personal friends of such
185 person and (ii) a home in which is received a child or children committed under the provisions of
186 subdivision A 4 of § 16.1-278.2, subdivision 6 of § 16.1-278.4, or subdivision A 13 of § 16.1-278.8.

187 "Independent living" means a planned program of services designed to assist a child aged 16 and
188 over and persons who are former foster care children between the ages of 18 and 21 in transitioning
189 from foster care to self sufficiency.

190 "Independent living arrangement" means placement of a child at least 16 years of age who is in the
191 custody of a local board or licensed child-placing agency and has been placed by the local board or
192 licensed child-placing agency in a living arrangement in which he does not have daily substitute parental
193 supervision.

194 "Independent living services" means services and activities provided to a child in foster care 14 years
195 of age or older who was committed or entrusted to a local board of social services, child welfare
196 agency, or private child-placing agency. "Independent living services" may also mean services and
197 activities provided to a person who was in foster care on his 18th birthday and has not yet reached the
198 age of 21 years. Such services shall include counseling, education, housing, employment, and money
199 management skills development, access to essential documents, and other appropriate services to help
200 children or persons prepare for self-sufficiency.

201 "Independent physician" means a physician who is chosen by the resident of the assisted living
202 facility and who has no financial interest in the assisted living facility, directly or indirectly, as an
203 owner, officer, or employee or as an independent contractor with the residence.

204 "Intercountry placement" means the arrangement for the care of a child in an adoptive home or foster
205 care placement into or out of the Commonwealth by a licensed child-placing agency, court, or other
206 entity authorized to make such placements in accordance with the laws of the foreign country under
207 which it operates.

208 "Interstate placement" means the arrangement for the care of a child in an adoptive home, foster care
209 placement or in the home of the child's parent or with a relative or nonagency guardian, into or out of
210 the Commonwealth, by a child-placing agency or court when the full legal right of the child's parent or
211 nonagency guardian to plan for the child has been voluntarily terminated or limited or severed by the
212 action of any court.

213 "Kinship care" means the full-time care, nurturing, and protection of children by relatives.

214 "Local board" means the local board of social services representing one or more counties or cities.

215 "Local department" means the local department of social services of any county or city in this
216 Commonwealth.

217 "Local director" means the director or his designated representative of the local department of the
218 city or county.

219 "Merit system plan" means those regulations adopted by the Board in the development and operation
220 of a system of personnel administration meeting requirements of the federal Office of Personnel
221 Management.

222 "Parental placement" means locating or effecting the placement of a child or the placing of a child in
223 a family home by the child's parent or legal guardian for the purpose of foster care or adoption.

224 "Public assistance" means Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); auxiliary grants to the
225 aged, blind and disabled; medical assistance; energy assistance; food stamps; employment services; child
226 care; and general relief.

227 "Qualified assessor" means an entity contracting with the Department of Medical Assistance Services
228 to perform nursing facility pre-admission screening or to complete the uniform assessment instrument for
229 a home and community-based waiver program, including an independent physician contracting with the
230 Department of Medical Assistance Services to complete the uniform assessment instrument for residents
231 of assisted living facilities, or any hospital that has contracted with the Department of Medical
232 Assistance Services to perform nursing facility pre-admission screenings.

233 "Registered family day home" means any family day home that has met the standards for voluntary
234 registration for such homes pursuant to regulations adopted by the Board and that has obtained a
235 certificate of registration from the Commissioner.

236 "Residential living care" means a level of service provided by an assisted living facility for adults
237 who may have physical or mental impairments and require only minimal assistance with the activities of
238 daily living. The definition of "residential living care" includes the services provided by independent
239 living facilities that voluntarily become licensed.

240 "Social services" means foster care, adoption, adoption assistance, adult services, adult protective
241 services, child-protective services, domestic violence services, or any other services program
242 implemented in accordance with regulations adopted by the Board.

243 "Special order" means an order imposing an administrative sanction issued to any party licensed

244 pursuant to this title by the Commissioner that has a stated duration of not more than 12 months. A
245 special order shall be considered a case decision as defined in § 2.2-4001.

246 "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families" or "TANF" means the program administered by the
247 Department through which a relative can receive monthly cash assistance for the support of his eligible
248 children.

249 "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families-Unemployed Parent" or "TANF-UP" means the
250 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program for families in which both natural or adoptive
251 parents of a child reside in the home and neither parent is exempt from the Virginia Initiative for
252 Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) participation under § 63.2-609.

253 "Title IV-E Foster Care" means a federal program authorized under §§ 472 and 473 of the Social
254 Security Act, as amended, and administered by the Department through which foster care is provided on
255 behalf of qualifying children.