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**HOUSE BILL NO. 697**

Offered January 11, 2012

Prefiled January 11, 2012

*A BILL to amend and reenact § 23-9.2:8 of the Code of Virginia, relating to higher education; mental health.*

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Patrons—Filler-Corn, Plum, Surovell and Watts

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Referred to Committee on Education**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:****1. That § 23-9.2:8 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 23-9.2:8. Students; mental health policies.

A. The governing boards of each public institution of higher education shall develop and implement policies that advise students, faculty, and staff, including residence hall staff, of the proper procedures for identifying and addressing the needs of students exhibiting suicidal tendencies or behavior. The policies shall ensure that no student is penalized or expelled solely for attempting to commit suicide, or seeking mental health treatment for suicidal thoughts or behaviors. Nothing in this section shall preclude any public institution of higher education from establishing policies and procedures for appropriately dealing with students who are a danger to themselves, or to others, and whose behavior is disruptive to the academic community.

B. *The governing boards of each public institution of higher education shall develop and implement a policy requesting each student to identify points of contact to be notified should the student experience a mental health crisis while attending the institution. The policy may require the student to waive privacy or confidentiality privileges granted to him under law and related to mental health care if a crisis were to arise and the points of contact were to be notified.*

INTRODUCED

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