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SENATE BILL NO. 294**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE**

(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Education and Health
on January 16, 2014)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Puckett)

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 54.1-2522.1, relating to the Prescription Monitoring Program; requirements of prescribers.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 54.1-2522.1 as follows:

§ 54.1-2522.1. Requirements of prescribers.

A. Any prescriber who is licensed in the Commonwealth and is authorized pursuant to §§ 54.1-3303 and 54.1-3408 to issue a prescription for a covered substance shall be registered with the Prescription Monitoring Program by the Department of Health Professions upon filing an application for licensure or renewal of licensure, if the prescriber is not already registered.

B. Prescribers registered with the Prescription Monitoring Program shall, prior to prescribing benzodiazepine or an opiate to a human patient as a new course of treatment lasting more than 90 days, excluding patients in hospice programs, request information from the Director for the purpose of determining, what, if any, other benzodiazepine or opiates are concurrently prescribed to the patient.

C. The Secretary of Health and Human Resources shall identify and publish a list of medical specialties that have a low potential for abuse by patients. Prescribers practicing in such identified specialties shall not be required to meet the provisions of subsection B.

2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on July 1, 2015.

SENATE SUBSTITUTE

SB294S1