

2015 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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SENATE BILL NO. 981

Offered January 14, 2015

Prefiled January 11, 2015

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 1 of Title 23 a section numbered 23-9.2:15, relating to institutions of higher education; sexual assault; memorandum of understanding and policies.*

Patrons—Favola, Howell, McEachin and Wexton; Delegate: Simon

Referred to Committee on Education and Health

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 1 of Title 23 a section numbered 23-9.2:15 as follows:

§ 23-9.2:15. *Sexual assault; memorandum of understanding; policies.*

A. The governing board of each public or private institution of higher education shall establish a written memorandum of understanding with a local sexual assault crisis center or other victim support service in order to provide sexual assault victims with immediate access to a confidential, independent advocate who can provide a trauma-informed response that includes an explanation of options for moving forward.

B. The governing board of each public or private institution of higher education shall adopt policies that require the institution to offer to refer a sexual assault victim to the sexual assault crisis center or other victim support service, encourage victims to undergo a sexual assault examination to preserve physical evidence, provide clear guidance on linking victims to other community resources, provide options for victims who do not want to make an official report to make an anonymous report to the institution, and provide amnesty for victims who fear their conduct may also be questioned or who are concerned that an official report might jeopardize their academic status.

C. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit the institution from offering its own support services to the victim or to require a sexual assault victim to take any action against such victim's wishes.

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