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HOUSE BILL NO. 2498

Offered January 9, 2019

Prefiled January 9, 2019

A BILL to amend and reenact § 52-34.2 of the Code of Virginia, relating to missing and endangered child; Endangered Missing Child Media Alert.

Patrons—Krizek, Ayala and Lopez

Referred to Committee on Militia, Police and Public Safety

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 52-34.2 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 52-34.2. Establishment of the Virginia Amber Alert Program; Endangered Missing Child Media Alert.

A. The Virginia State Police shall develop policies for the establishment of uniform standards for the creation of Amber Alert Programs throughout the Commonwealth. Amber Alert Programs may be local, regional, or statewide. They may include multiple localities or regions and may be expanded or compressed. The Virginia State Police may (i) inform local law-enforcement officials of the policies and procedures for the Amber Alert Programs set by the State Police; (ii) assist in determining the geographic scope of a particular Amber Alert; and (iii) establish procedures and standards by which a local law-enforcement agency may verify a child has been abducted and report such information to the Virginia State Police.

B. The establishment of an Amber Alert Program by a locality and the media is voluntary and nothing in this chapter shall be construed to be a mandate that local officials or the media establish or participate in an Amber Alert Program. Existing Amber Agreements and Programs shall not be altered by the act of assembly creating this chapter.

C. *Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit the Virginia State Police from issuing a public or media alert at the request of a law-enforcement agency regarding a missing and endangered child who does not meet the definition of an abducted child solely because of insufficient evidence to believe that the child has been abducted. The Virginia State Police shall develop policies for the establishment of uniform standards for the implementation of an Endangered Missing Child Media Alert in such circumstances.*

INTRODUCED

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