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SENATE BILL NO. 569

Offered January 8, 2020

Prefiled January 7, 2020

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 37.2-312.3 and by adding in Chapter 11 of Title 52 a section numbered 52-50, relating to the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and the Department of State Police; mobile applications; mental health and public safety.

Patrons—Dunnavant, Barker and Mason

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 a section numbered 37.2-312.3 and by adding in Chapter 11 of Title 52 a section numbered 52-50 as follows:

§ 37.2-312.3. Mental health mobile application.

A. The Department shall develop or obtain a mental health mobile application to facilitate the provision of real-time, 24 hours a day, seven days a week crisis intervention services by licensed clinicians, including support or crisis counseling, suicide prevention, and referral services, to individuals in the Commonwealth through calls, texts, and online chat portals. The Department shall facilitate appropriate follow-up and referral services for clients of the mobile application.

B. The mobile application described in subsection A shall be integrated with the crisis intervention phone hotline administered by a third-party provider under contract with the Department of Medical Assistance Services. The Department of Medical Assistance Services shall provide the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services with data and other information necessary to ensure such integration.

C. The Secretary of Health and Human Resources shall promote, market, and advertise the use of the mental health mobile application throughout the Commonwealth.

§ 52-50. Public safety mobile application.

A. The Department of State Police, in coordination with the Virginia Fusion Intelligence Center (the Center), shall develop or obtain a public safety mobile application to provide to individuals in the Commonwealth a platform that is capable of receiving text, audio, images, and video to submit confidential tips concerning (i) a suspected, anticipated, or completed criminal violation or (ii) bullying, threats of school violence, or other school-related safety concerns. The Department of State Police, in coordination with the Center, shall develop a referral system to ensure that confidential tips received through the mobile application are referred to the appropriate law-enforcement agency, school board, threat assessment team, or other relevant entity.

B. The Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security shall promote, market, and advertise the use of the public safety mobile application throughout the Commonwealth.

2. That the mobile applications required by this act may be one comprehensive mobile application or may be separate mobile applications. The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and the Department of State Police shall coordinate the development or procurement of such mobile applications.

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