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HOUSE BILL NO. 2446

Offered January 21, 1999

A BILL to amend and reenact § 18.2-57 of the Code of Virginia, relating to battery of a sports official; penalty.

Patrons—Reid, Cantor, Davis, Guest, Howell, Landes, Purkey, Rollison, Rust and Tata

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 18.2-57 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 18.2-57. Assault and battery.

A. Any person who ~~shall commit~~ *commits* a simple assault or assault and battery shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor, and if the person intentionally selects the person against whom a simple assault is committed because of his race, religious conviction, color or national origin, the penalty upon conviction shall include a mandatory, minimum term of confinement of at least six months, thirty days of which shall not be suspended, in whole or in part.

B. However, if a person intentionally selects the person against whom an assault and battery resulting in bodily injury is committed because of his race, religious conviction, color or national origin, the person shall be guilty of a Class 6 felony, and the penalty upon conviction shall include a mandatory, minimum term of confinement of at least six months, thirty days of which shall not be suspended, in whole or in part.

C. In addition, if any person commits an assault or an assault and battery against another knowing or having reason to know that such other person is a law-enforcement officer, as defined hereinafter, or firefighter, as defined in § 65.2-102, engaged in the performance of his public duties as a law-enforcement officer or firefighter, such person shall be guilty of a Class 6 felony, and, upon conviction, the sentence of such person shall include a mandatory, minimum term of confinement in jail for six months.

Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to affect the right of any person charged with a violation of this section from asserting and presenting evidence in support of any defenses to the charge that may be available under common law.

D. *In addition, if any person commits a battery against another knowing or having reason to know that such other person is an athletic contest official engaged in the performance of his duties as such, he shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor and the sentence of such person upon conviction shall include a mandatory, minimum sentence of fifteen days in jail, two days of which shall not be suspended in whole or in part. However, if the offense is committed by use of a firearm, the person shall serve a mandatory, minimum sentence of confinement of six months which shall not be suspended in whole or in part.*

A E. As used in this section, "law-enforcement officer" means any full-time or part-time employee of a police department or sheriff's office which is part of or administered by the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof, who is responsible for the prevention or detection of crime and the enforcement of the penal, traffic or highway laws of this Commonwealth, and any conservation officer of the Department of Conservation and Recreation commissioned pursuant to § 10.1-115, and such officer also includes auxiliary police officers appointed or provided for pursuant to §§ 15.1-159.2 and 15.1-159.4 and auxiliary deputy sheriffs appointed pursuant to § 15.1-48.

D. As used in this section, the term "mandatory, minimum" means that the sentence it describes shall be served with no suspension of sentence in whole or in part, and that no probation shall be given by the court.

As used in this section, "athletic contest official" means any referee, umpire, coach, instructor, administrator, staff person, or school or school board employee of any public or private secondary school while actively engaged in conducting, supervising, refereeing or officiating a school-sanctioned interscholastic athletic contest or any person who serves as a referee, umpire or linesman or in any similar capacity in supervising or administering a sports event, and who is registered as a member of a local, state, regional, or national organization which provides training or educational opportunities for sports officials.

INTRODUCED

HB2446