

18100379D

HOUSE BILL NO. 344

Offered January 10, 2018

Prefiled January 4, 2018

A *BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 23.1-401.1 and to repeal § 23.1-900.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to public institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth; campus free speech; policies, training, and reports.*

Patrons—Landes, LaRock, Hugo, Marshall and Poindexter

Referred to Committee on Education

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 23.1-401.1 as follows:

§ 23.1-401.1. Campus free speech; policies, training, and reports.

A. Except as otherwise permitted by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, no public institution of higher education shall abridge the constitutional freedom of any individual, including enrolled students, faculty and other employees, and invited guests, to speak on campus.

B. Each public institution of higher education shall establish and include in its student handbook, on its website, and in its student orientation programs policies regarding free speech on campus.

C. Each public institution of higher education shall develop training materials and implement training programs on the policies established pursuant to subsection B for any employee who is responsible for the discipline or education of enrolled students.

D. Each public institution of higher education shall post conspicuously on its website and annually update a report that includes:

1. A description of any barriers to free speech on campus; any incidents of disruption of free speech on campus, including any attempt to block or prohibit campus speakers and any investigation of students or student organizations for their speech; and any disciplinary action taken against the individual or entity that was responsible for any such barrier or incident of disruption;

2. A copy of any complaint against the institution alleging a violation of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution; and

3. Any other information relating to free speech on campus that the institution deems necessary to publicly report.

2. That § 23.1-900.1 of the Code of Virginia is repealed.

INTRODUCED

HB344