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SENATE BILL NO. 636

Offered January 10, 2018

Prefiled January 10, 2018

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 63.2-100 and 63.2-905 of the Code of Virginia and to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Chapter 13 of Title 63.2 a section numbered 63.2-1305, relating to Kinship Guardianship Assistance program.

Patrons—Dunnavant, Favola and Ebbin

Referred to Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 63.2-100 and 63.2-905 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted and that the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Chapter 13 of Title 63.2 a section numbered 63.2-1305 as follows:

§ 63.2-100. Definitions.

As used in this title, unless the context requires a different meaning:

"Abused or neglected child" means any child less than 18 years of age:

1. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care creates or inflicts, threatens to create or inflict, or allows to be created or inflicted upon such child a physical or mental injury by other than accidental means, or creates a substantial risk of death, disfigurement, or impairment of bodily or mental functions, including, but not limited to, a child who is with his parent or other person responsible for his care either (i) during the manufacture or attempted manufacture of a Schedule I or II controlled substance, or (ii) during the unlawful sale of such substance by that child's parents or other person responsible for his care, where such manufacture, or attempted manufacture or unlawful sale would constitute a felony violation of § 18.2-248;

2. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care neglects or refuses to provide care necessary for his health. However, no child who in good faith is under treatment solely by spiritual means through prayer in accordance with the tenets and practices of a recognized church or religious denomination shall for that reason alone be considered to be an abused or neglected child. Further, a decision by parents who have legal authority for the child or, in the absence of parents with legal authority for the child, any person with legal authority for the child, who refuses a particular medical treatment for a child with a life-threatening condition shall not be deemed a refusal to provide necessary care if (i) such decision is made jointly by the parents or other person with legal authority and the child; (ii) the child has reached 14 years of age and is sufficiently mature to have an informed opinion on the subject of his medical treatment; (iii) the parents or other person with legal authority and the child have considered alternative treatment options; and (iv) the parents or other person with legal authority and the child believe in good faith that such decision is in the child's best interest. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to limit the provisions of § 16.1-278.4;

3. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care abandons such child;

4. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care commits or allows to be committed any act of sexual exploitation or any sexual act upon a child in violation of the law;

5. Who is without parental care or guardianship caused by the unreasonable absence or the mental or physical incapacity of the child's parent, guardian, legal custodian or other person standing in loco parentis;

6. Whose parents or other person responsible for his care creates a substantial risk of physical or mental injury by knowingly leaving the child alone in the same dwelling, including an apartment as defined in § 55-79.2, with a person to whom the child is not related by blood or marriage and who the parent or other person responsible for his care knows has been convicted of an offense against a minor for which registration is required as a violent sexual offender pursuant to § 9.1-902; or

7. Who has been identified as a victim of sex trafficking or severe forms of trafficking as defined in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, 22 U.S.C. § 7102 et seq., and in the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act of 2015, 42 U.S.C. § 5101 et seq.

If a civil proceeding under this title is based solely on the parent having left the child at a hospital or emergency medical services agency, it shall be an affirmative defense that such parent safely delivered the child to a hospital that provides 24-hour emergency services or to an attended emergency medical services agency that employs emergency medical services providers, within 14 days of the child's birth. For purposes of terminating parental rights pursuant to § 16.1-283 and placement for adoption, the court may find such a child is a neglected child upon the ground of abandonment.

59 "Adoptive home" means any family home selected and approved by a parent, local board or a
60 licensed child-placing agency for the placement of a child with the intent of adoption.

61 "Adoptive placement" means arranging for the care of a child who is in the custody of a
62 child-placing agency in an approved home for the purpose of adoption.

63 "Adult abuse" means the willful infliction of physical pain, injury or mental anguish or unreasonable
64 confinement of an adult as defined in § 63.2-1603.

65 "Adult day care center" means any facility that is either operated for profit or that desires licensure
66 and that provides supplementary care and protection during only a part of the day to four or more aged,
67 infirm or disabled adults who reside elsewhere, except (i) a facility or portion of a facility licensed by
68 the State Board of Health or the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and (ii)
69 the home or residence of an individual who cares for only persons related to him by blood or marriage.
70 Included in this definition are any two or more places, establishments or institutions owned, operated or
71 controlled by a single entity and providing such supplementary care and protection to a combined total
72 of four or more aged, infirm or disabled adults.

73 "Adult exploitation" means the illegal, unauthorized, improper, or fraudulent use of an adult as
74 defined in § 63.2-1603 or his funds, property, benefits, resources, or other assets for another's profit,
75 benefit, or advantage, including a caregiver or person serving in a fiduciary capacity, or that deprives the
76 adult of his rightful use of or access to such funds, property, benefits, resources, or other assets. "Adult
77 exploitation" includes (i) an intentional breach of a fiduciary obligation to an adult to his detriment or
78 an intentional failure to use the financial resources of an adult in a manner that results in neglect of
79 such adult; (ii) the acquisition, possession, or control of an adult's financial resources or property
80 through the use of undue influence, coercion, or duress; and (iii) forcing or coercing an adult to pay for
81 goods or services or perform services against his will for another's profit, benefit, or advantage if the
82 adult did not agree, or was tricked, misled, or defrauded into agreeing, to pay for such goods or services
83 or to perform such services.

84 "Adult foster care" means room and board, supervision, and special services to an adult who has a
85 physical or mental condition. Adult foster care may be provided by a single provider for up to three
86 adults.

87 "Adult neglect" means that an adult as defined in § 63.2-1603 is living under such circumstances
88 that he is not able to provide for himself or is not being provided services necessary to maintain his
89 physical and mental health and that the failure to receive such necessary services impairs or threatens to
90 impair his well-being. However, no adult shall be considered neglected solely on the basis that such
91 adult is receiving religious nonmedical treatment or religious nonmedical nursing care in lieu of medical
92 care, provided that such treatment or care is performed in good faith and in accordance with the
93 religious practices of the adult and there is a written or oral expression of consent by that adult.

94 "Adult protective services" means services provided by the local department that are necessary to
95 protect an adult as defined in § 63.2-1603 from abuse, neglect or exploitation.

96 "Assisted living care" means a level of service provided by an assisted living facility for adults who
97 may have physical or mental impairments and require at least a moderate level of assistance with
98 activities of daily living.

99 "Assisted living facility" means any congregate residential setting that provides or coordinates
100 personal and health care services, 24-hour supervision, and assistance (scheduled and unscheduled) for
101 the maintenance or care of four or more adults who are aged, infirm or disabled and who are cared for
102 in a primarily residential setting, except (i) a facility or portion of a facility licensed by the State Board
103 of Health or the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, but including any
104 portion of such facility not so licensed; (ii) the home or residence of an individual who cares for or
105 maintains only persons related to him by blood or marriage; (iii) a facility or portion of a facility
106 serving infirm or disabled persons between the ages of 18 and 21, or 22 if enrolled in an educational
107 program for the handicapped pursuant to § 22.1-214, when such facility is licensed by the Department as
108 a children's residential facility under Chapter 17 (§ 63.2-1700 et seq.), but including any portion of the
109 facility not so licensed; and (iv) any housing project for persons 62 years of age or older or the disabled
110 that provides no more than basic coordination of care services and is funded by the U.S. Department of
111 Housing and Urban Development, by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, or by the Virginia Housing
112 Development Authority. Included in this definition are any two or more places, establishments or
113 institutions owned or operated by a single entity and providing maintenance or care to a combined total
114 of four or more aged, infirm or disabled adults. Maintenance or care means the protection, general
115 supervision and oversight of the physical and mental well-being of an aged, infirm or disabled
116 individual.

117 "Auxiliary grants" means cash payments made to certain aged, blind or disabled individuals who
118 receive benefits under Title XVI of the Social Security Act, as amended, or would be eligible to receive
119 these benefits except for excess income.

120 "Birth family" or "birth sibling" means the child's biological family or biological sibling.

"Birth parent" means the child's biological parent and, for purposes of adoptive placement, means parent(s) by previous adoption.

"Board" means the State Board of Social Services.

"Child" means any natural person under 18 years of age.

"Child day center" means a child day program offered to (i) two or more children under the age of 13 in a facility that is not the residence of the provider or of any of the children in care or (ii) 13 or more children at any location.

"Child day program" means a regularly operating service arrangement for children where, during the absence of a parent or guardian, a person or organization has agreed to assume responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child under the age of 13 for less than a 24-hour period.

"Child-placing agency" means any person who places children in foster homes, adoptive homes or independent living arrangements pursuant to § 63.2-1819 or a local board that places children in foster homes or adoptive homes pursuant to §§ 63.2-900, 63.2-903, and 63.2-1221. Officers, employees, or agents of the Commonwealth, or any locality acting within the scope of their authority as such, who serve as or maintain a child-placing agency, shall not be required to be licensed.

"Child-protective services" means the identification, receipt and immediate response to complaints and reports of alleged child abuse or neglect for children under 18 years of age. It also includes assessment, and arranging for and providing necessary protective and rehabilitative services for a child and his family when the child has been found to have been abused or neglected or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

"Child support services" means any civil, criminal or administrative action taken by the Division of Child Support Enforcement to locate parents; establish paternity; and establish, modify, enforce, or collect child support, or child and spousal support.

"Child-welfare agency" means a child day center, child-placing agency, children's residential facility, family day home, family day system, or independent foster home.

"Children's residential facility" means any facility, child-caring institution, or group home that is maintained for the purpose of receiving children separated from their parents or guardians for full-time care, maintenance, protection and guidance, or for the purpose of providing independent living services to persons between 18 and 21 years of age who are in the process of transitioning out of foster care. Children's residential facility shall not include:

1. A licensed or accredited educational institution whose pupils, in the ordinary course of events, return annually to the homes of their parents or guardians for not less than two months of summer vacation;

2. An establishment required to be licensed as a summer camp by § 35.1-18; and

3. A licensed or accredited hospital legally maintained as such.

"Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Department, his designee or authorized representative.

"Department" means the State Department of Social Services.

"Department of Health and Human Services" means the Department of Health and Human Services of the United States government or any department or agency thereof that may hereafter be designated as the agency to administer the Social Security Act, as amended.

"Disposable income" means that part of the income due and payable of any individual remaining after the deduction of any amount required by law to be withheld.

"Energy assistance" means benefits to assist low-income households with their home heating and cooling needs, including, but not limited to, purchase of materials or substances used for home heating, repair or replacement of heating equipment, emergency intervention in no-heat situations, purchase or repair of cooling equipment, and payment of electric bills to operate cooling equipment, in accordance with § 63.2-805, or provided under the Virginia Energy Assistance Program established pursuant to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Act of 1981 (Title XXVI of Public Law 97-35), as amended.

"Family day home" means a child day program offered in the residence of the provider or the home of any of the children in care for one through 12 children under the age of 13, exclusive of the provider's own children and any children who reside in the home, when at least one child receives care for compensation. The provider of a licensed or registered family day home shall disclose to the parents or guardians of children in their care the percentage of time per week that persons other than the provider will care for the children. Family day homes serving five through 12 children, exclusive of the provider's own children and any children who reside in the home, shall be licensed. However, no family day home shall care for more than four children under the age of two, including the provider's own children and any children who reside in the home, unless the family day home is licensed or voluntarily registered. However, a family day home where the children in care are all related to the provider by blood or marriage shall not be required to be licensed.

"Family day system" means any person who approves family day homes as members of its system;

182 who refers children to available family day homes in that system; and who, through contractual
183 arrangement, may provide central administrative functions including, but not limited to, training of
184 operators of member homes; technical assistance and consultation to operators of member homes;
185 inspection, supervision, monitoring, and evaluation of member homes; and referral of children to
186 available health and social services.

187 "Foster care placement" means placement of a child through (i) an agreement between the parents or
188 guardians and the local board where legal custody remains with the parents or guardians or (ii) an
189 entrustment or commitment of the child to the local board or licensed child-placing agency.

190 "Foster home" means the place of residence of any natural person in which any child, other than a
191 child by birth or adoption of such person, resides as a member of the household.

192 "General relief" means money payments and other forms of relief made to those persons mentioned
193 in § 63.2-802 in accordance with the regulations of the Board and reimbursable in accordance with §
194 63.2-401.

195 "Independent foster home" means a private family home in which any child, other than a child by
196 birth or adoption of such person, resides as a member of the household and has been placed therein
197 independently of a child-placing agency except (i) a home in which are received only children related by
198 birth or adoption of the person who maintains such home and children of personal friends of such
199 person and (ii) a home in which is received a child or children committed under the provisions of
200 subdivision A 4 of § 16.1-278.2, subdivision 6 of § 16.1-278.4, or subdivision A 13 of § 16.1-278.8.

201 "Independent living" means a planned program of services designed to assist a child age 16 and over
202 and persons who are former foster care children between the ages of 18 and 21 in transitioning to
203 self-sufficiency.

204 "Independent living arrangement" means placement of a child at least 16 years of age who is in the
205 custody of a local board or licensed child-placing agency and has been placed by the local board or
206 licensed child-placing agency in a living arrangement in which he does not have daily substitute parental
207 supervision.

208 "Independent living services" means services and activities provided to a child in foster care 14 years
209 of age or older who was committed or entrusted to a local board of social services, child welfare
210 agency, or private child-placing agency. "Independent living services" may also mean services and
211 activities provided to a person who (i) was in foster care on his 18th birthday and has not yet reached
212 the age of 21 years or (ii) is at least 18 years of age but who has not yet reached 21 years of age and
213 who, immediately prior to his commitment to the Department of Juvenile Justice, was in the custody of
214 a local board of social services. Such services shall include counseling, education, housing, employment,
215 and money management skills development, access to essential documents, and other appropriate
216 services to help children or persons prepare for self-sufficiency.

217 "Independent physician" means a physician who is chosen by the resident of the assisted living
218 facility and who has no financial interest in the assisted living facility, directly or indirectly, as an
219 owner, officer, or employee or as an independent contractor with the residence.

220 "Intercountry placement" means the arrangement for the care of a child in an adoptive home or foster
221 care placement into or out of the Commonwealth by a licensed child-placing agency, court, or other
222 entity authorized to make such placements in accordance with the laws of the foreign country under
223 which it operates.

224 "Interstate placement" means the arrangement for the care of a child in an adoptive home, foster care
225 placement or in the home of the child's parent or with a relative or nonagency guardian, into or out of
226 the Commonwealth, by a child-placing agency or court when the full legal right of the child's parent or
227 nonagency guardian to plan for the child has been voluntarily terminated or limited or severed by the
228 action of any court.

229 "Kinship care" means the full-time care, nurturing, and protection of children by relatives.

230 "Kinship guardian" means the adult relative of a child in a kinship guardianship established in
231 accordance with § 63.2-1305 who has been awarded custody of the child by the court after acting as the
232 child's foster parent.

233 "Kinship guardianship" means a relationship established in accordance with § 63.2-1305 between a
234 child and an adult relative of the child who has formerly acted as the child's foster parent that is
235 intended to be permanent and self-sustaining as evidenced by the transfer by the court to the adult
236 relative of the child of the authority necessary to ensure the protection, education, care and control, and
237 custody of the child and the authority for decision making for the child.

238 "Kinship Guardianship Assistance program" means a program consistent with 42 U.S.C § 673 that
239 provides, subject to a kinship guardianship assistance agreement developed in accordance with
240 § 63.2-1305, payments to eligible individuals who have received custody of a relative child of whom they
241 had been the foster parents.

242 "Local board" means the local board of social services representing one or more counties or cities.

243 "Local department" means the local department of social services of any county or city in this

244 Commonwealth.

245 "Local director" means the director or his designated representative of the local department of the
246 city or county.

247 "Merit system plan" means those regulations adopted by the Board in the development and operation
248 of a system of personnel administration meeting requirements of the federal Office of Personnel
249 Management.

250 "Parental placement" means locating or effecting the placement of a child or the placing of a child in
251 a family home by the child's parent or legal guardian for the purpose of foster care or adoption.

252 "Public assistance" means Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); auxiliary grants to the
253 aged, blind and disabled; medical assistance; energy assistance; food stamps; employment services; child
254 care; and general relief.

255 "Qualified assessor" means an entity contracting with the Department of Medical Assistance Services
256 to perform nursing facility pre-admission screening or to complete the uniform assessment instrument for
257 a home and community-based waiver program, including an independent physician contracting with the
258 Department of Medical Assistance Services to complete the uniform assessment instrument for residents
259 of assisted living facilities, or any hospital that has contracted with the Department of Medical
260 Assistance Services to perform nursing facility pre-admission screenings.

261 "Registered family day home" means any family day home that has met the standards for voluntary
262 registration for such homes pursuant to regulations adopted by the Board and that has obtained a
263 certificate of registration from the Commissioner.

264 "Residential living care" means a level of service provided by an assisted living facility for adults
265 who may have physical or mental impairments and require only minimal assistance with the activities of
266 daily living. The definition of "residential living care" includes the services provided by independent
267 living facilities that voluntarily become licensed.

268 "Sibling" means each of two or more children having one or more parents in common.

269 "Social services" means foster care, adoption, adoption assistance, child-protective services, domestic
270 violence services, or any other services program implemented in accordance with regulations adopted by
271 the Board. Social services also includes adult services pursuant to Article 4 (§ 51.5-144 et seq.) of
272 Chapter 14 of Title 51.5 and adult protective services pursuant to Article 5 (§ 51.5-148) of Chapter 14
273 of Title 51.5 provided by local departments of social services in accordance with regulations and under
274 the supervision of the Commissioner for Aging and Rehabilitative Services.

275 "Special order" means an order imposing an administrative sanction issued to any party licensed
276 pursuant to this title by the Commissioner that has a stated duration of not more than 12 months. A
277 special order shall be considered a case decision as defined in § 2.2-4001.

278 "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families" or "TANF" means the program administered by the
279 Department through which a relative can receive monthly cash assistance for the support of his eligible
280 children.

281 "Temporary Assistance for Needy Families-Unemployed Parent" or "TANF-UP" means the
282 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program for families in which both natural or adoptive
283 parents of a child reside in the home and neither parent is exempt from the Virginia Initiative for
284 Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) participation under § 63.2-609.

285 "Title IV-E Foster Care" means a federal program authorized under §§ 472 and 473 of the Social
286 Security Act, as amended, and administered by the Department through which foster care is provided on
287 behalf of qualifying children.

288 **§ 63.2-905. Foster care services.**

289 Foster care services are the provision of a full range of casework, treatment and community services,
290 including but not limited to independent living services, for a planned period of time to a child who is
291 abused or neglected as defined in § 63.2-100 or in need of services as defined in § 16.1-228 and his
292 family when the child (i) has been identified as needing services to prevent or eliminate the need for
293 foster care placement, (ii) has been placed through an agreement between the local board or the public
294 agency designated by the community policy and management team and the parents or guardians where
295 legal custody remains with the parents or guardians, or (iii) has been committed or entrusted to a local
296 board or licensed child placing agency, or (iv) is currently committed or entrusted to a local board or
297 licensed child-placing agency, has lived with a relative custodian for at least six months, and meets the
298 requirements to participate in the Kinship Guardianship Assistance program set forth in § 63.2-1305.
299 Foster care services also include the provision and restoration of independent living services to a person
300 who is over the age of 18 years but who has not yet reached the age of 21 years, in accordance with
301 § 63.2-905.1.

302 **§ 63.2-1305. Kinship Guardianship Assistance program.**

303 A. The Kinship Guardianship Assistance program is established to facilitate placements with relatives
304 and ensure permanency for children for whom adoption or being returned home are not appropriate

305 permanency options. Kinship guardianship assistance may include Title IV-E maintenance payments,
306 state-funded maintenance payments, state special services payments, and nonrecurring expense payments
307 made pursuant to this section.

308 B. A child is eligible for kinship guardianship assistance under the program if:

309 1. The child has been removed from his home pursuant to a voluntary placement agreement or as a
310 result of a judicial determination that continuation in the home would be contrary to the welfare of the
311 child;

312 2. The child was eligible for foster care maintenance payments under 42 U.S.C. § 672 or under state
313 law while residing for at least six consecutive months in the home of the prospective kinship guardian;

314 3. Being returned home or adopted is not an appropriate permanency option for the child;

315 4. The child demonstrates a strong attachment to the prospective kinship guardian, and the
316 prospective kinship guardian has a strong commitment to caring permanently for the child; and

317 5. The child has been consulted regarding the kinship guardianship if the child is 14 years of age or
318 older.

319 C. If a child does not meet the eligibility criteria set forth in subsection B but has a sibling who
320 meets such criteria, the child may be placed in the same kinship guardianship with his eligible sibling,
321 in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 671(a)(31), if the local department and kinship guardian agree that such
322 placement is appropriate. In such cases, kinship guardianship assistance may be paid on behalf of each
323 sibling so placed.

324 D. In order to receive payments under 42 U.S.C. § 674(a)(5) or pursuant to the Children's Services
325 Act (§ 2.2-5200 et seq.), the local department and the prospective kinship guardian of a child who meets
326 the requirements of subsection B shall enter into a negotiated, written kinship guardianship assistance
327 agreement containing terms providing for the following:

328 1. The amount of, and the manner in which, each kinship guardianship assistance payment will be
329 provided and the manner in which such payment may be adjusted periodically, in consultation with the
330 kinship guardian, on the basis of the circumstances of the kinship guardian and the needs of the child;

331 2. The additional services or assistance, if any, for which the child and kinship guardian will be
332 eligible under the agreement;

333 3. The procedure by which the kinship guardian may apply for additional services as needed;

334 4. Subject to 42 U.S.C. § 673(d)(1)(D), assurance that the local department shall pay the total cost
335 of nonrecurring expenses associated with obtaining kinship guardianship of the child, to the extent that
336 the total cost does not exceed \$2,000; and

337 5. Assurance that the agreement shall remain in effect without regard to the state of residency of the
338 kinship guardian.

339 E. A kinship guardianship assistance payment on behalf of a child pursuant to this section shall not
340 exceed the foster care maintenance payment that would have been paid on behalf of the child had the
341 child remained in a foster family home.

342 F. The Board shall promulgate regulations for the Kinship Guardianship Assistance program that
343 are necessary to comply with Title IV-E requirements, including those set forth in 42 U.S.C. § 673. The
344 regulations may set forth qualifications for kinship guardians, the conditions under which a kinship
345 guardianship may be established, the requirements for the development and amendment of a kinship
346 guardianship assistance agreement, and the manner of payments on behalf of siblings placed in the
347 same household.