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SENATE BILL NO. 448

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Education and Health
on February 3, 2022)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Boysko)

A BILL to direct the Task Force on Services for Survivors of Sexual Assault to convene a workgroup to develop best practices for hospital policies and procedures related to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault; report.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. That the Task Force on Services for Survivors of Sexual Assault (the Task Force) shall convene a workgroup to develop best practices for hospital policies and procedures related to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The workgroup shall include the Director of the Department of Criminal Justice Services or his designee; the Director of the Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative or his designee; two individuals who are licensed forensic nurse examiners or sexual assault nurse examiners; representatives of Virginia-based sexual and domestic violence advocacy organizations, to include representatives of the Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence Action Alliance, the YWCA of Richmond, the Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley, the Hampton Roads Community Action Program, and the Fairfax County Office for Women & Domestic and Sexual Violence Services; four survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence; two members of the Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association; two members of the Medical Society of Virginia; two members of the Virginia Nurses Association; one member of FMS Speaks; two members of the Virginia College of Emergency Physicians; two members of the Virginia Chapter of the International Association of Forensic Nurses; and any other relevant stakeholders. The workgroup shall provide recommendations on (i) effective methods of screening to determine if a patient is a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault; (ii) best practices for, with the consent of the patient, documenting injuries related to domestic violence and sexual assault in a patient's medical record, preserving evidence of domestic violence and sexual assault, and establishing a chain of custody for evidence collected with law enforcement; (iii) procedures to refer victims of domestic violence and sexual assault to available crisis intervention services; (iv) the feasibility and training of designated hospital staff to ensure implementation of all policies and procedures related to domestic violence and sexual assault; and (v) training for health care providers and hospital staff who engage in patient contact related to identifying and caring for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by November 1, 2022.