

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2023 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 2991

By Delegate Steele

[Introduced January 24, 2023; Referred to the
Committee on the Judiciary]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,
 2 designated §61-2-10c, relating to establishing the crime of torture; establishing criminal
 3 penalties; defining terms; providing that pain is not an element of the crime of torture; and
 4 establishing that conviction of the crime of torture does not preclude conviction of another
 5 offense arising from the same transaction.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 2. CRIMES AGAINST THE PERSON.

§61-2-10c. Torture.

1 (a) A person who, with the intent to cause cruel or extreme physical or mental pain and
 2 suffering, inflicts serious bodily injury or severe mental pain or suffering upon another person
 3 within his or her custody or physical control commits the crime of torture is guilty of a felony and,
 4 upon conviction, shall be confined in a state correctional facility for a determinate sentence of not
 5 less than 15 years.

6 (b) As used in this section:

7 (1) "Cruel" means brutal, inhuman, sadistic, or that which torments.

8 (2) "Custody or physical control" means the forcible restriction of a person's movements or
 9 forcible confinement of the person so as to interfere with that person's liberty, without that person's
 10 consent or without lawful authority.

11 (3) "Serious bodily injury" means either of the following:

12 (A) Bodily injury that creates or is caused by a substantial risk of death, which causes
 13 prolonged disfigurement, prolonged impairment of health, or prolonged loss or impairment of the
 14 function of any bodily organ; or

15 (B) Bodily injury that creates one or more of the following conditions:

16 (i) Serious impairment of a body function or substantial physical pain;

17 (ii) Permanent impairment of physical condition;

18 (iii) Internal injury;

- 19 (iv) Poisoning;
- 20 (v) Deprivation of water and food;
- 21 (vi) Serious burns or scalding; or
- 22 (vii) Severe cuts, fractures, life threatening or multiple puncture wounds.
- 23 (4) "Severe mental pain or suffering" means a mental injury that results in a substantial
- 24 alteration of mental functioning that is manifested in a visibly demonstrable manner caused by or
- 25 resulting from any of the following:
- 26 (A) The intentional infliction or threatened infliction of great bodily injury;
- 27 (B) The administration or application, or threatened administration or application, of mind-
- 28 altering substances or other procedures calculated to disrupt the senses or the personality;
- 29 (C) The threat of imminent death; or
- 30 (D) The threat that another person will imminently be subjected to death, great bodily
- 31 injury, or the administration or application of mind-altering substances or other procedures
- 32 calculated to disrupt the senses or personality.
- 33 (c) Proof that a victim suffered pain is not an element of the crime under this section.
- 34 (d) A conviction or sentence under this section does not preclude a conviction or sentence
- 35 for a violation of any other law of this state arising from the same transaction.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to establish the crime of torture. The bill establishes criminal penalties. The bill defines terms.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.