

H. B. 4269

(By Delegate Manypenny, Longstreth, Poore, Wells, Sponaugle, Marcum, Barrett, Eldridge, Ellem, Guthrie, Fleishcauer)

[Introduced January 23, 2014; referred to the Committee on Education then the Judiciary.]

A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section, designated §18A-3A-7, relating to creating a Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children within the Center for Professional Development; composition of members; duty to make recommendations; and providing that members serve without expense reimbursement or compensation.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

That the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, be amended by adding thereto a new section, designated §18A-3A-7, to read as follows:

ARTICLE 3A. CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

§18A-3A-7. Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of

Children.

1 (a) The Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of
2 Children is created within the Center for Professional Development.
3 The task force shall consist of all of the following members:

4 (1) One member of the West Virginia Senate and one member of
5 the public, appointed by the President of the Senate;

6 (2) One member of the West Virginia House of Delegates and one
7 member of the public, appointed by the Speaker of the House of
8 Delegates;

9 (3) One member of the public, appointed by the Governor;

10 (4) The President of the State Board of Education, or his or
11 her designee;

12 (5) The State Superintendent of Schools, or his or her
13 designee;

14 (6) The Secretary of the Department of Health and Human
15 Resources, or his or her designee;

16 (7) The Director of the Prosecuting Attorney's Institute, or
17 his or her designee;

18 (8) A representative of a statewide professional teachers'
19 organization, appointed by the head of that organization;

20 (9) A representative of a different statewide professional
21 teachers' organization, appointed by the head of that organization;

22 (10) A representative of a statewide professional school
23 service personnel organization, appointed by the head of that
24 organization;

1 (11) A representative of a statewide professional principals'
2 organization, appointed by the head of that organization;

3 (12) A representative of a statewide professional social
4 workers' organization, appointed by the head of that organization;

5 (13) A representative of a teacher preparation program from a
6 regionally accredited institution of higher education in West
7 Virginia, appointed by the West Virginia Chancellor of the Higher
8 Education Policy Commission;

9 (14) The Director of Prevent Child Abuse West Virginia, or his
10 or her designee;

11 (15) The Director of the West Virginia Child Advocacy Network,
12 or his or her designee;

13 (16) The Director of the West Virginia Coalition Against
14 Domestic Violence, or his or her designee;

15 (17) The Director of the West Virginia Foundation for Rape
16 Information and Services, or his or her designee;

17 (18) The Administrative Director of the West Virginia Supreme
18 Court of Appeals, or his or her designee; and

19 (19) A representative of an organization representing law
20 enforcement, appointed by the Superintendent of the West Virginia
21 State Police.

22 (b) Members of the task force must be individuals who are
23 actively involved in the fields of the prevention of child abuse
24 and neglect and child welfare. The appointment of members must

1 reflect the geographic diversity of the state.

2 (c) The task force shall elect a presiding officer by a
3 majority vote of the membership of the task force. The task force
4 shall meet at the call of the presiding officer. The task force
5 shall make recommendations for reducing child sexual abuse in West
6 Virginia. In making those recommendations, the task force shall:

7 (1) Gather information concerning child sexual abuse
8 throughout the state;

9 (2) Receive reports and testimony from individuals, state and
10 local agencies, community-based organizations, and other public and
11 private organizations;

12 (3) Create goals for state education policy that would prevent
13 child sexual abuse;

14 (4) Create goals for other areas of state policy that would
15 prevent child sexual abuse; and

16 (5) Submit a report with its recommendations to the Office of
17 the Governor and the Legislature.

18 (d) The recommendations may include proposals for specific
19 statutory changes and methods to foster cooperation among state
20 agencies and between the state and local government. The task force
21 shall consult with employees of the Bureau for Children and Family
22 Services, the Division of Justice and Community Services, the West
23 Virginia State Police, the West Virginia State Board of Education,
24 and any other state agency or department as necessary to accomplish

1 the task force's responsibilities under this section. The members
2 of the task force shall serve without compensation and may not be
3 reimbursed for their expenses.

4 (e) This section may be referred to as Erin Merryn's Law.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create a Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children within the Center for Professional Development. The new section may be referred to as Erin Merryn's Law.

§18A-3A-7 is new; therefore, it has been completely underscored.