WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

**FISCAL NOTE**

2024 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

House Bill 4238

By Delegate Hornbuckle

[Introduced January 10, 2024; Referred  
to the Committee on Banking and Insurance then Finance]

A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new article, designated §16-25A-1, §16-25A-2, and §16-25A-3, all relating to screening for adverse childhood experiences; providing for a definition and setting forth legislative findings; and setting forth terms for mandatory insurance coverage and school coverage.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

article 25a. adverse childhood experiences.

§16-25A-1. Legislative findings.

There is evidence of causation between adverse childhood experiences and addiction and chronic disease. Early detection and intervention reduce the likelihood that these experiences will lead to morbidity later in life. Factors such as food insecurity, housing insecurity, living in a single parent household, or having a parent who suffers from substance use disorder are all indicators of childhood trauma and all are prevalent in this state. This causes the citizens of this state to be more at risk for chronic disease than citizens of the other states.

§16-25A-2. Definition.

"Adverse Childhood Experiences" are traumatic experiences occurring in childhood which create real and lasting physiological changes to the brain, immune system, stress response, and behavior patterns; the result of which is higher risk for certain chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, respiratory illness, and even lung cancer.

§16-25A-3. Mandatory insurance coverage; school coverage.

All public and private health insurance offered in this state shall cover screening for adverse childhood experiences as part of preventative child wellness visits. In cases where the child has no form of health insurance, the State Department of Education shall develop a program to provide school-based adverse childhood experiences screening through local schools.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to require screenings for adverse childhood experiences.

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