

**E N G R O S S E D**

**H. B. 2535**

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[Introduced February 2, 2015; referred to the  
Committee on Health and Human Resources; and then  
to the Committee on Education.]

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A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section, designated §18-2-40; to amend said code by adding thereto a new section, designated §18B-1B-7; to amend said code by adding thereto a new article, designated §27-6-1 and §27-6-2; and to amend and reenact §30-1-7a of said code, all relating generally to suicide prevention training; requiring middle and high schools to provide information and opportunities for discussion of suicide prevention to students; authorizing the State Board of Education to consult with the Bureau for Behavioral

Health to assure the quality and accuracy of the information provided; providing that institutions of higher education will develop and implement a policy to advise students and staff on available depression and suicide prevention resources; requiring suicide prevention information to be provided to all incoming students; requiring suicide prevention information to be posted on the websites of institutions of higher education; requiring free prevention materials and programs to be posted on the websites of all institutions of higher education, the higher education policy commission and the Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities; requiring the Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities to review such posted materials annually; providing legislative findings; requiring the Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities to post certain suicide prevention and awareness information on its website; providing for the Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities to assist middle and high schools in providing suicide prevention information to students; requiring certain health care professionals to obtain continuing education courses on suicide prevention and related topics as part of their license renewal; providing that certain health care profes-

sionals may only be required to complete two hours of suicide prevention training; requiring certain health care licensing boards to establish continuing education requirements and criteria and approve continuing education courses on suicide prevention and related topics.

*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 §18-2-40; that said code be amended by adding thereto a new section, designated §18B-1B-7; that said code be amended by adding thereto a new article, designated §27-6-1; all to read as follows:

## **CHAPTER 18. EDUCATION.**

### **ARTICLE 2. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION.**

#### **§18-2-40. Suicide prevention awareness training; dissemination of information.**

- 1        On or before September 1, 2015 and each year thereafter, a
- 2        public middle and high school administrator shall disseminate
- 3        and provide opportunities to discuss suicide prevention aware-
- 4        ness information to all middle and high school students. The
- 5        information may be obtained from the Bureau for Behavioral

6 Health and Health Facilities or from a commercially developed  
7 suicide prevention training program approved by the State Board  
8 of Education in consultation with the bureau to assure the  
9 accuracy and appropriateness of the information.

## **CHAPTER 18B. HIGHER EDUCATION.**

### **ARTICLE 1B. HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION.**

#### **§18B-1B-7. Student mental health policies; suicide prevention.**

- 1       (a) Each public and private institution of higher education  
2 shall develop and implement a policy to advise students and staff  
3 on suicide prevention programs available on and off campus that  
4 includes, but is not limited to:
- 5       (1) Crisis intervention access, which includes information  
6 for national, state and local suicide prevention hotlines;
- 7       (2) Mental health program access, which provides informa-  
8 tion on the availability of local mental health clinics, student  
9 health services and counseling services;
- 10       (3) Multimedia application access, which includes crisis  
11 hotline contact information, suicide warning signs, resources  
12 offered and free-of-cost applications;

13       (4) Student communication plans, which consist of creating  
14 outreach plans regarding educational and outreach activities on  
15 suicide prevention; and

16       (5) Post intervention plans which include creating a strategic  
17 plan to communicate effectively with students, staff and parents  
18 after the loss of a student to suicide.

19       (b) Each public and private institution of higher education  
20 shall provide all incoming students with information about  
21 depression and suicide prevention resources available to  
22 students. The information provided to students shall include  
23 available mental health services and other support services,  
24 including student-run organizations for individuals at risk of or  
25 affected by suicide.

26       (c) The information prescribed by subsection (a), subdivi-  
27 sions (1) through (4) of this section shall be posted on the  
28 website of each institution of higher education in this state.

29       (d) Any applicable free-of-cost prevention materials or  
30 programs shall be posted on the websites of the public and  
31 private institutions of higher education, the Higher Education

32 Policy Commission, and the West Virginia Council for Commu-  
33 nity and Technical College Education.

**CHAPTER 27. MENTALLY ILL PERSONS.**

**ARTICLE 6. SUICIDE PREVENTION AND AWARENESS.**

**§27-6-1. Dissemination of information.**

1       (a) The Bureau for Behavioral Health and Health Facilities  
2 shall, on or before August 1, 2015, post on its website suicide  
3 prevention awareness information, to include recognizing the  
4 warning signs of a suicide crisis. The website shall include  
5 information related to suicide prevention training opportunities  
6 offered by the bureau or an agency recognized by the bureau as  
7 a training provider.

8       (b) The bureau may assist the public middle and high school  
9 administrators in providing suicide prevention information to  
10 students in the public middle and high schools.

11       (c) The bureau shall annually review, for adequacy and  
12 completeness, the materials or programs posted on the websites  
13 of the institutions of higher education as required by section  
14 seven, article one-b, chapter eighteen-b of this code.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to expand the number of people who are trained in suicide prevention in order to maximize the possibility that at risk children and adults can be saved. School personnel from middle school through college will not only be trained, they will provide children and young adults with suicide prevention information, facilitate discussion about preventing suicide and make mental health resources available. Licensed medical professionals will be required to obtain education in suicide prevention as part of their licensing process.

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

Sections §18-2-40, §18B-1B-7 and article §27-6-1 and §27-6-2 are new; therefore, they have been completely underscored.

This bill was recommended to introduction and passage by the Joint Committee on Children and Families.

