

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2020 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced

Senate Bill 50

BY SENATOR CLINE

[Introduced January 8, 2020; referred
to the Committee on Government Organization; and
then to the Committee on Finance]

1 A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding thereto a new section,
2 designated §24-6-15, relating to the creation of emergency text number systems for
3 children; and declaring this be known as Constance's Law.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 6. LOCAL EMERGENCY TELEPHONE SYSTEM.

§24-6-15. Creation of emergency text number systems for children.

1 (a) Upon the adoption by the Public Service Commission of a comprehensive plan, the
2 public agency may establish, consistent with the comprehensive plan, an emergency text number
3 system for children within its jurisdiction to be compatible with mobile telephones. Nothing
4 contained in this section may be construed to prohibit or discourage in any way the establishment
5 of multijurisdiction or regional systems, and any emergency text number system established
6 pursuant to this article may include the territory of more than one public agency, or may include
7 only a portion of the territory of a public agency. To the extent feasible, emergency text number
8 systems shall be centralized, and the text number shall be a number that is simple and easy for
9 a child to be taught and remember. If a child needs help in any emergency, the child can text the
10 word "help" to the emergency text number. The message shall be received by the local law
11 enforcement agency that shall respond accordingly to each situation.

12 (b) The Legislature finds and declares that the purpose of this legislation is to provide
13 children an outlet to escape violence and other emergencies and that this section shall be known
14 as "Constance's Law."

15 (c) Every emergency text number system for children shall provide access to emergency
16 services organizations, police, fire fighting and emergency medical and ambulance services and
17 may provide access to other emergency services. The system may also provide access to private
18 ambulance services.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to create an emergency text number system for children

to escape violence and other emergencies and declaring that this be known as “Constance’s Law.”

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