

1 HB197
2 168322-6
3 By Representative Collins
4 RFD: Education Policy
5 First Read: 10-MAR-15

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2 ENROLLED, An Act,

3 To adopt "Erin's Law" in Alabama; to adopt
4 guidelines for K-12 instructional courses on how to recognize
5 and avoid child sexual abuse; to provide for an age
6 appropriate curriculum in public K-12 schools on avoiding
7 child sexual abuse; and to create the Governor's Task Force on
8 Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

10 Section 1. (a) The Legislature recognizes that Erin
11 Merryn was raped and molested for six and a half years by a
12 neighbor and a family member. She began a crusade her senior
13 year of high school in 2004 to end the silence and shame
14 around sexual abuse. Erin's Law has been adopted in a number
15 of states to help address the problem of child sexual abuse.

16 (b) The intent of Erin's Law is to shatter the
17 silence and stigma around child sexual abuse, and to educate
18 children and empower them to recognize and to report abuse.

19 (c) The Legislature finds that without a specific
20 initiative like Erin's Law, schools generally fail to give
21 young students adequate awareness and a voice in this issue.

22 Section 2. (a) The Governor's Task Force on
23 Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children created under
24 subsection (b) shall adopt guidelines for a child sexual abuse
25 prevention instructional program. The guidelines shall:

1 (1) Educate children in grades pre-kindergarten
2 through 12 in public schools on child sexual abuse prevention
3 through age appropriate curriculum through role plays,
4 discussions, activities, and books.

5 (2) Give children the knowledge and encouragement to
6 speak up and tell if anyone has ever touched them
7 inappropriately, rather than keep it a secret.

8 (3) Educate children on safe touch, unsafe touch,
9 safe secrets, and unsafe secrets, and how to get away from an
10 abuser and report an incident immediately.

11 (b)(1) There is created the Governor's Task Force on
12 Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children.

13 (2) Members of the task force shall include the
14 following:

15 a. Eight members appointed by the Governor
16 representing the eight regional school board districts and
17 reflecting the racial, ethnic, gender, and age diversity of
18 the state. The appointees shall be actively involved in the
19 fields of child abuse and neglect prevention and child
20 welfare.

21 b. One member appointed by the State Superintendent
22 of Education.

23 c. One member appointed by the Commissioner of the
24 Department of Human Resources.

1 d. One member appointed by the Executive Director of
2 the Children's Trust Fund.

3 e. The House Education Policy Committee Chair, or
4 his or her designee.

5 f. The Senate Education and Youth Affairs Committee
6 Chair, or his or her designee.

7 (3) The task force shall make recommendations for
8 decreasing the incidence of sexual abuse of children in this
9 state. In making recommendations, the task force shall do all
10 of the following:

11 a. Gather information regarding sexual abuse of
12 children throughout the state.

13 b. Receive related reports and testimony from
14 individuals, state and local agencies, community-based
15 organizations, and other public and private organizations.

16 c. Create goals for state education policy that
17 would enhance the prevention of sexual abuse of children.

18 d. Create goals for other areas of state policy that
19 would enhance the prevention of sexual abuse of children.

20 e. Submit a report with its recommendations to the
21 Governor and the Legislature by December 31, 2015.

22 (4) Recommendations by the task force may include
23 proposals for specific statutory changes and methods to foster
24 cooperation among state agencies and between the state and
25 local governments.

(5) At the call of the Governor, the task force shall convene its first meeting and by majority vote of the members present elect a chair and co-chair. Subsequent meetings shall be at the call of the chair.

(6) Members of the task force shall serve without compensation and shall not receive expense reimbursement.

(c) All K-12 public schools shall establish a child sexual abuse prevention instructional program for students in grades consistent with subsection (a). The content of instruction shall be at the discretion of the local board; provided that, at a minimum, the instruction shall include all of the following:

(1) Techniques to teach children to recognize child sexual abuse, equip them with skills to reduce their vulnerability, and encourage them to report the abuse.

(2) At least four sessions of instruction to reinforce the concepts learned in the program.

(3) Sessions conducted at least annually, building on skills learned in the previous years.

(4) Developmentally appropriate instruction for each grade level.

(5) Involvement of students as active learning participants, including discussions, modeling, and role playing.

1 (6) The capacity to be delivered by a wide range of
2 personnel and professionals, including teachers, school
3 counselors, and outside agency prevention educators; provided
4 that the personnel and professionals should have a thorough
5 knowledge of child sexual abuse, including how to respond
6 appropriately to child sexual abuse disclosures.

7 (7) An evaluation component with measurable
8 outcomes.

9 (8) Instruction that is culturally sensitive and
10 adaptable for use within varying school contexts, including
11 age, race, and special needs.

12 (9) An evidence-based curriculum, to the extent
13 possible.

14 (10) A professional training component for
15 administrators, teachers, and other school personnel on
16 talking to students about child sexual abuse prevention,
17 effects of child sexual abuse on children, handling of child
18 sexual abuse disclosures, and mandated reporting.

19 (11) A component that encourages parental
20 involvement within the child sexual abuse prevention program.
21 This component shall inform parents about child sexual abuse
22 topics, including characteristics of offenders, grooming
23 behaviors, and how to discuss this topic with children.

1 Section 3. This act shall become effective
2 immediately following its passage and approval by the
3 Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.

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Speaker of the House of Representatives

President and Presiding Officer of the Senate

House of Representatives

I hereby certify that the within Act originated in
and was passed by the House 26-MAY-15, as amended.

Jeff Woodard
Clerk

Senate

04-JUN-15

Passed