RECALLED

May 21, 2014

**H. 4413**

Introduced by Reps. Limehouse, Sottile, Taylor and Sabb

S. Printed 5/21/14--H.

Read the first time January 14, 2014.

**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND THE CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, SO AS TO ENACT THE “REPORT‑A‑BULLY IN SCHOOL WEBSITE ACT”; BY ADDING SECTION 59‑63‑145 SO AS TO PROVIDE EACH SCHOOL DISTRICT SHALL DEVELOP A WEBSITE THROUGH WHICH A PERSON MAY ANONYMOUSLY REPORT ACTS OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, OR BULLYING OF A STUDENT AT SCHOOL; TO PROVIDE THE DISTRICT SHALL RESPOND TO COMPLAINTS RECEIVED BY MEANS OF THE WEBSITE IN A CERTAIN MANNER; TO IMPOSE RELATED REPORTING REQUIREMENTS ON THE DISTRICT; TO PROVIDE THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION SHALL DEVELOP RELATED GUIDELINES; AND TO PROVIDE THAT INFORMATION RECEIVED THROUGH THE WEBSITE IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. This act must be known and may be cited as the “Report‑a‑Bully in School Website Act”.

SECTION 2. Article 2, Chapter 63, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑63‑145. (A) Before September 1, 2014, each local school district shall include on its website a form that a student can complete online to anonymously report acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying of a student in a school. This form must be called the ‘Report‑a‑Bully in School Website’, and a link to the form must be conspicuously displayed on the home page of the website for each district and school within the district. At a minimum, the form must include information about the date, location, and circumstances of the incident, along with the identity of the person who committed the incident. The school promptly shall investigate the allegations consistent with policies adopted by the district pursuant to the Safe School Climate Act. Each month the school shall report the number of acts reported through the website, the nature of each alleged act, whether the investigation of the report is pending or resolved, and if resolved, the date of the resolution.

(B) To assist local school districts in developing policies for providing a ‘Report‑a‑Bully in School Website’, the State Board of Education shall develop model policies concerning the development, implementation, and promotion of the website within thirty days after the effective date of this section. This model policy shall include a template for a ‘Report‑a‑Bully in School Website’ that a school may use for its website. The State Board of Education also shall develop and implement a program to promote awareness of the website, emphasizing that preserving the anonymity of the identity of a person making a report is of paramount importance.

(C) A report submitted through a ‘Report‑a‑Bully in School Website’ is not subject to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act”.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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