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HOUSE BILL NO. 1998

Offered January 13, 2025

Prefiled January 7, 2025

A BILL to amend and reenact § 18.2-59.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to sexual extortion; penalty.

Patron—Walker

Referred to Committee for Courts of Justice

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 18.2-59.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 18.2-59.1. Sexual extortion; penalty.

A. Any person who maliciously threatens in writing, including an electronically transmitted communication producing a visual or electronic message, (i) to disseminate, sell, or publish a videographic or still image, created by any means whatsoever, or (ii) to not delete, remove, or take back a previously disseminated, sold, or published videographic or still image, created by any means whatsoever, that depicts the complaining witness or such complaining witness's family or household member, as defined in § 16.1-228, as totally nude or in a state of undress so as to expose the genitals, pubic area, buttocks, or female breast with the intent to cause the complaining witness to engage in sexual intercourse, cunnilingus, fellatio, anilingus, anal intercourse, inanimate or animate object sexual penetration, or an act of sexual abuse, as defined in § 18.2-67.10, and thereby engages in sexual intercourse, cunnilingus, fellatio, anilingus, anal intercourse, inanimate or animate object sexual penetration, or an act of sexual abuse, as defined in § 18.2-67.10, is guilty of a Class 5 felony. However, any adult who violates this section with a person under the age of 18 is guilty of a felony punishable by confinement in a state correctional facility for a term of not less than one nor more than 20 years and by a fine of not more than \$100,000.

B. *Any person who maliciously threatens eviction, loss of housing, property damage, or any financial loss with the intent to cause the complaining witness to engage in sexual intercourse, cunnilingus, fellatio, anilingus, anal intercourse, inanimate or animate object sexual penetration, or an act of sexual abuse, as defined in § 18.2-67.10, and thereby engages in sexual intercourse, cunnilingus, fellatio, anilingus, anal intercourse, inanimate or animate object sexual penetration, or an act of sexual abuse, as defined in § 18.2-67.10, is guilty of a Class 5 felony. However, any adult who violates this section with a person under the age of 18 is guilty of a felony punishable by confinement in a state correctional facility for a term of not less than one nor more than 20 years and by a fine of not more than \$100,000.*

C. A prosecution pursuant to this section may be in the county, city, or town in which the communication was either made or received.

2. That the provisions of this act may result in a net increase in periods of imprisonment or commitment. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of imprisonment in state adult correctional facilities; therefore, Chapter 2 of the Acts of Assembly of 2024, Special Session I, requires the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission to assign a minimum fiscal impact of \$50,000. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of commitment to the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice.

INTRODUCED

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