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1 **HOUSE BILL NO. 294**

2 Offered January 14, 2026

3 Prefiled January 9, 2026

4 *A BILL to amend and reenact § 18.2-51.1 of the Code of Virginia, relating to malicious bodily injury to*
5 *correctional officers; penalties.*

6 Patron—Cornett

7 Committee Referral Pending

8 **Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**9 **1. That § 18.2-51.1 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**10 **§ 18.2-51.1. Malicious bodily injury to correctional officers, law-enforcement officers, firefighters,**
11 **search and rescue personnel, or emergency medical services personnel; penalties; lesser-included**
12 **offense.**13 **A. As used in this section:**14 *"Law-enforcement officer" means any full-time or part-time employee of a police department or sheriff's*
15 *office that is part of or administered by the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof who is*
16 *responsible for the prevention or detection of crime and the enforcement of the penal, traffic, or highway*
17 *laws of the Commonwealth; any conservation officer of the Department of Conservation and Recreation*
18 *commissioned pursuant to § 10.1-115; any conservation police officer appointed pursuant to § 29.1-200; and*
19 *any auxiliary police officer appointed or provided for pursuant to §§ 15.2-1731 and 15.2-1733 and auxiliary*
20 *deputy sheriff appointed pursuant to § 15.2-1603.*21 *"Search and rescue personnel" means any employee or member of a search and rescue organization that*
22 *is authorized by a resolution or ordinance duly adopted by the governing body of any county, city, or town of*
23 *the Commonwealth or any member of a search and rescue organization operating under a memorandum of*
24 *understanding with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.*25 **B. If any person maliciously causes bodily injury to another by any means, including the means set out in**
26 **§ 18.2-52, with intent to maim, disfigure, disable, or kill, and knowing or having reason to know that such**
27 **other person is a *correctional officer, as defined in § 53.1-1*, law-enforcement officer, as defined hereinafter,**
28 **firefighter, as defined in § 65.2-102, search and rescue personnel as defined hereinafter, or emergency**
29 **medical services personnel, as defined in § 32.1-111.1, engaged in the performance of his public duties as a**
30 ***correctional officer, law-enforcement officer, firefighter, search and rescue personnel, or emergency medical***
31 ***services personnel, such person is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for a period of not less than***
32 ***five years nor more than 30 years and, subject to subdivision (g) of § 18.2-10, a fine of not more than***
33 ***\$100,000. Upon conviction, the sentence of such person shall include a mandatory minimum term of***
34 ***imprisonment of two years.***35 **C. If any person unlawfully, but not maliciously, with the intent aforesaid, causes bodily injury to another**
36 **by any means, knowing or having reason to know such other person is a *correctional officer, as defined in***
37 ***§ 53.1-1*, law-enforcement officer, firefighter, as defined in § 65.2-102, search and rescue personnel, or**
38 **emergency medical services personnel, as defined in § 32.1-111.1, engaged in the performance of his public**
39 **duties as a *correctional officer, law-enforcement officer, firefighter, search and rescue personnel, or emergency medical***
40 ***services personnel as defined in § 32.1-111.1, he is guilty of a Class 6 felony, and upon***
41 ***conviction, the sentence of such person shall include a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of one***
42 ***year.***43 **D. Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the right of any person charged with a violation of**
44 **this section from asserting and presenting evidence in support of any defenses to the charge that may be**
45 **available under common law.**46 **As used in this section, "law enforcement officer" means any full-time or part-time employee of a police**
47 **department or sheriff's office that is part of or administered by the Commonwealth or any political**
48 **subdivision thereof, who is responsible for the prevention or detection of crime and the enforcement of the**
49 **penal, traffic, or highway laws of the Commonwealth; any conservation officer of the Department of**
50 **Conservation and Recreation commissioned pursuant to § 10.1-115; any conservation police officer**
51 **appointed pursuant to § 29.1-200; and auxiliary police officers appointed or provided for pursuant to**
52 **§§ 15.2-1731 and 15.2-1733 and auxiliary deputy sheriffs appointed pursuant to § 15.2-1603.**53 **As used in this section, "search and rescue personnel" means any employee or member of a search and**
54 **rescue organization that is authorized by a resolution or ordinance duly adopted by the governing body of any**
55 **county, city, or town of the Commonwealth or any member of a search and rescue organization operating**
56 **under a memorandum of understanding with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management.**

INTRODUCED

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59 *E.* The provisions of § 18.2-51 shall be deemed to provide a lesser-included offense hereof.
60 **2. That the provisions of this act may result in a net increase in periods of imprisonment or**
61 **commitment. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary**
62 **appropriation cannot be determined for periods of imprisonment in state adult correctional facilities;**
63 **therefore, Chapter 725 of the Acts of Assembly of 2025 requires the Virginia Criminal Sentencing**
64 **Commission to assign a minimum fiscal impact of \$50,000. Pursuant to § 30-19.1:4 of the Code of**
65 **Virginia, the estimated amount of the necessary appropriation cannot be determined for periods of**
66 **commitment to the custody of the Department of Juvenile Justice.**