

HOUSE BILL NO. 2162

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the House Committee on/for \_\_\_\_\_

on \_\_\_\_\_)

(Patron Prior to Substitute--Delegate Tran)

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding in Article 1 of Chapter 5 of Title 32.1 a section numbered 32.1-137.08, relating to medical care facilities; persons with disabilities; designated support persons.

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding in Article 1 of Chapter 5 of Title 32.1 a section numbered 32.1-137.08 as follows:**

**§ 32.1-137.08. Medical care facilities; persons with disabilities; designated support persons.**

A. As used in this section:

"Activity of daily living" means a personal care task such as bathing, dressing, toileting, transferring, and eating or feeding.

"Admission" means (i) with regard to a medical care facility that is a hospital or hospice facility, accepting a person for (a) bed occupancy and care that is anticipated to span at least two midnights or (b) observation and (ii) with regard to a medical care facility that is an outpatient surgical hospital, accepting a person for care, irrespective of anticipated length of care.

"Designated support person" means a person who is 18 years of age or older; knowledgeable about the needs of a person with a disability; and designated, orally or in writing, by the person with a disability or his guardian, authorized representative, or care provider to provide support and assistance necessary due to the specifics of the person's disability to the person with a disability at any time during which health care services are provided.

"Medical care facility" means a hospital licensed pursuant to this article that provides inpatient care, other than a hospital that is certified as a long-term acute care hospital or specialty rehabilitation

27 hospital; an outpatient surgical hospital licensed or certified pursuant to this article; a hospice facility  
28 licensed pursuant to Article 7 (§ 32.1-162.1 et seq.); and any institution exempt from licensure pursuant  
29 to clause (vi) of § 32.1-124.

30 "Person with a disability" means a person who, prior to admission to a medical care facility, had a  
31 physical, sensory, mental, or emotional impairment that substantially limits one or more activities of daily  
32 living or has a record of such impairment.

33 "Support and assistance necessary due to the specifics of the person's disability" means support  
34 and assistance, including assistance with activities of daily living, communication, decision-making, and  
35 other supports, that is (i) necessary due to the absence, loss, diminution, or impairment of a physical,  
36 sensory, behavioral, cognitive, or emotional function of the person due to the specifics of his disability;  
37 (ii) provided by a designated support person; (iii) ongoing; and (iv) necessary for the care of, and to afford  
38 meaningful access to health care for, the person with a disability.

39 B. Every medical care facility shall allow a person with a disability who requires support and  
40 assistance necessary due to the specifics of the person's disability to be accompanied by a designated  
41 support person who will provide support and assistance necessary due to the specifics of the person's  
42 disability to the person with a disability during an admission. In any case in which the duration of the  
43 admission lasts more than 24 hours, the person with a disability may designate more than one designated  
44 support person. However, no medical care facility shall be required to allow more than one designated  
45 support person to be present with a person with a disability at any time.

46 C. A designated support person is not a visitor and shall not be subject to any restrictions on  
47 visitation adopted by a medical care facility. However, such designated support person may be required  
48 to comply with all reasonable requirements of the medical care facility adopted to protect the health and  
49 safety of the person with a disability; the designated support person; the staff and other patients of, or  
50 visitors to, the medical care facility; and the public. A medical care facility may restrict a designated  
51 support person's access to specified areas of and movement on the premises of the medical care facility  
52 when such restrictions are determined by the medical care facility to be reasonably necessary to protect

53 the health and safety of the person with a disability; the designated support person; the staff and other  
54 patients of, or visitors to, the medical care facility; and the public.

55 D. A medical care facility may request that a person with a disability provide documentation  
56 indicating that he is a person with a disability and, if the person fails, refuses, or is unable to provide such  
57 documentation, perform an objective assessment of the person to determine whether he is a person with a  
58 disability; however, the failure of a hospital to perform such objective assessment shall not constitute  
59 grounds for prohibiting a designated support person from accompanying a person with a disability for the  
60 purpose of providing support and assistance necessary due to the specifics of the person's disability.

61 E. Every medical care facility shall (i) establish protocols to inform patients, at the time of  
62 admission, of the right of a person with a disability who requires support and assistance necessary due to  
63 the specifics of the person's disability to be accompanied by a designated support person for the purpose  
64 of providing support and assistance necessary due to the specifics of the person's disability and (ii) develop  
65 and make available to a patient, the patient's guardian, the patient's authorized representative, or the  
66 person's care provider upon request of the patient, guardian, authorized representative, or care provider  
67 written information regarding the right of a person with a disability who requires support and assistance  
68 necessary due to the specifics of the person's disability to be accompanied by a designated support person  
69 and policies related thereto. Every medical care facility shall also make such written information available  
70 to the public on its website.

71 F. The Department shall develop and make available on its website information for the public  
72 regarding (i) the right of a person with a disability who requires support and assistance necessary due to  
73 the specifics of the person's disability to be accompanied by a designated support person who will provide  
74 support and assistance necessary due to the specifics of the person's disability to the person with a  
75 disability during an admission and (ii) the requirements of this section.

76 G. Nothing in this section shall alter the obligation of a medical care facility to provide patients  
77 with effective communication support or other required services, regardless of the presence of a designated  
78 support person or other reasonable accommodation, consistent with applicable federal or state law or  
79 regulations.

80 H. Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to (i) prevent a medical care facility from complying,  
81 or interfere with the ability of a medical care facility to comply, with or cause a medical care facility to  
82 violate any federal or state law or regulation, (ii) deem a designated support person to be acting under the  
83 direction or control of the medical care facility or as an agent of the medical care facility, or (iii) require  
84 any medical care facility to allow a designated support person to perform any action or provide any support  
85 or assistance necessary due to the specifics of the person's disability when the medical care facility  
86 reasonably determines that the performance of such action or provision of such support or assistance  
87 necessary due to the specifics of the person's disability would be medically or therapeutically  
88 contraindicated or would pose a threat to the health and safety of the person with a disability; the  
89 designated support person; or the staff or other patients of, or visitors to, the medical care facility.

90 **2. That an emergency exists and this act is in force from its passage.**

91 **3. That the Board of Health shall promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of this act to**  
92 **be effective within 280 days of its enactment.**

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