

SENATE BILL 210

F5
SB 30/14 – EHE

5lr1934
CF 5lr2191

By: **Senators Young, Conway, Hough, Montgomery, and Nathan–Pulliam**

Introduced and read first time: February 2, 2015

Assigned to: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Educational Institutions – Personal Electronic Account – Privacy Protection**

3 FOR the purpose of prohibiting an educational institution from requiring, requesting,
4 suggesting, or causing a student, an applicant, or a prospective student to grant
5 access to, allow observation of, or disclose information that allows access to or
6 observation of the individual’s personal electronic account; prohibiting an
7 educational institution from compelling a student, an applicant, or a prospective
8 student, as a condition of acceptance or participation in curricular or extracurricular
9 activities, to add certain individuals to a certain list of contacts or to change certain
10 privacy settings; prohibiting an educational institution from taking or threatening
11 to take certain actions against a student, or failing or refusing to admit an applicant,
12 as a result of the student’s or applicant’s refusal to grant access to, allow observation
13 of, or disclose certain information relating to a personal electronic account, add
14 certain individuals to a certain list of contacts, or change certain privacy settings;
15 providing that this Act may not be construed to prohibit an educational institution
16 from requesting or requiring a student to disclose access information to certain
17 electronic accounts, to prohibit or restrict an educational institution from viewing,
18 accessing, or utilizing certain information that is available in the public domain or
19 available to an educational institution as the result of certain actions of the student,
20 to create a duty to search or monitor the activity of a personal electronic account, to
21 make an educational institution liable for failing to request or require a student, an
22 applicant, or a prospective student to grant access to, allow observation of, or disclose
23 certain information relating to a personal electronic account, to prohibit a student,
24 an applicant, or a prospective student from allowing a certain individual to view
25 certain communications, or to apply to a certain investigation conducted by a certain
26 department of or in accordance with a certain policy or protocol of an institution of
27 postsecondary education; authorizing an individual who is the subject of a violation
28 of this Act to take certain legal action; establishing that an educational institution’s
29 action in compliance with federal or State law is an affirmative defense to a claim
30 under this Act; defining certain terms; and generally relating to the personal

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 electronic accounts of students, applicants, and prospective students of educational
2 institutions.

3 BY adding to

4 Article – Education

5 Section 26–401 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 4. Personal Electronic Account
6 Privacy Protection”

7 Annotated Code of Maryland

8 (2014 Replacement Volume and 2014 Supplement)

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
10 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

11 **Article – Education**

12 **SUBTITLE 4. PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT PRIVACY PROTECTION.**

13 **26–401.**

14 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS
15 INDICATED.

16 (2) “ACCESS INFORMATION” MEANS A USER NAME, A PASSWORD,
17 LOG-IN INFORMATION, AN ACCOUNT NAME, OR ANY OTHER SECURITY INFORMATION
18 THAT PROTECTS ACCESS TO A PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT.

19 (3) “EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION” MEANS A PUBLIC OR PRIVATE
20 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION THAT OFFERS STUDENTS AN ORGANIZED COURSE OF
21 STUDY OR TRAINING THAT IS ACADEMIC, TECHNICAL, TRADE-ORIENTED, OR
22 PREPARATORY FOR GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT IN A RECOGNIZED OCCUPATION.

23 (4) (I) “PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT” MEANS AN ACCOUNT
24 CREATED VIA AN ELECTRONIC MEDIUM OR A SERVICE THAT ALLOWS USERS TO
25 CREATE, SHARE, OR VIEW USER-GENERATED CONTENT, INCLUDING UPLOADING OR
26 DOWNLOADING VIDEOS OR STILL PHOTOGRAPHS, BLOGS, VIDEO BLOGS, PODCASTS,
27 MESSAGES, ELECTRONIC MAIL, INTERNET WEB SITE PROFILES OR LOCATIONS, OR
28 ANY OTHER ELECTRONIC INFORMATION.

29 (II) “PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT” DOES NOT INCLUDE
30 AN ACCOUNT THAT IS OPENED ON BEHALF OF, OR OWNED OR PROVIDED BY, AN
31 EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION.

32 (5) “STUDENT” INCLUDES AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS A PARTICIPANT,
33 TRAINEE, OR STUDENT IN AN ORGANIZED COURSE OF STUDY OR TRAINING OFFERED
34 BY AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION.

1 **(B) SUBJECT TO SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION, AN EDUCATIONAL**
2 **INSTITUTION MAY NOT:**

3 **(1) REQUIRE, REQUEST, SUGGEST, OR CAUSE A STUDENT, AN**
4 **APPLICANT, OR A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT TO GRANT ACCESS TO, ALLOW**
5 **OBSERVATION OF, OR DISCLOSE INFORMATION THAT ALLOWS ACCESS TO OR**
6 **OBSERVATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT;**

7 **(2) COMPEL A STUDENT, AN APPLICANT, OR A PROSPECTIVE**
8 **STUDENT, AS A CONDITION OF ACCEPTANCE OR PARTICIPATION IN CURRICULAR OR**
9 **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, TO:**

10 **(I) ADD TO THE LIST OF CONTACTS ASSOCIATED WITH A**
11 **PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT ANY INDIVIDUAL, INCLUDING A COACH, A**
12 **TEACHER, AN ADMINISTRATOR, ANOTHER EMPLOYEE OF THE EDUCATIONAL**
13 **INSTITUTION, OR A VOLUNTEER; OR**

14 **(II) CHANGE THE PRIVACY SETTINGS ASSOCIATED WITH A**
15 **PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT;**

16 **(3) TAKE ANY ACTION OR THREATEN TO TAKE ANY ACTION TO**
17 **DISCHARGE, DISCIPLINE, PROHIBIT FROM PARTICIPATING IN CURRICULAR OR**
18 **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, OR OTHERWISE PENALIZE A STUDENT AS A RESULT**
19 **OF THE STUDENT'S REFUSAL TO:**

20 **(I) GRANT ACCESS TO, ALLOW OBSERVATION OF, OR DISCLOSE**
21 **ANY INFORMATION THAT ALLOWS ACCESS TO OR OBSERVATION OF A PERSONAL**
22 **ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT;**

23 **(II) ADD ANY INDIVIDUAL TO THE LIST OF CONTACTS**
24 **ASSOCIATED WITH A PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT; OR**

25 **(III) CHANGE THE PRIVACY SETTINGS ASSOCIATED WITH A**
26 **PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT; OR**

27 **(4) FAIL OR REFUSE TO ADMIT AN APPLICANT AS A RESULT OF THE**
28 **APPLICANT'S REFUSAL TO:**

29 **(I) GRANT ACCESS TO, ALLOW OBSERVATION OF, OR DISCLOSE**
30 **ANY INFORMATION THAT ALLOWS ACCESS TO OR OBSERVATION OF A PERSONAL**
31 **ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT;**

1 **(II) ADD ANY INDIVIDUAL TO THE LIST OF CONTACTS**
2 **ASSOCIATED WITH A PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT; OR**

3 **(III) CHANGE THE PRIVACY SETTINGS ASSOCIATED WITH A**
4 **PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT.**

5 **(C) THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO:**

6 **(1) PROHIBIT AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION FROM REQUESTING OR**
7 **REQUIRING A STUDENT TO DISCLOSE ACCESS INFORMATION TO ALLOW THE**
8 **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION TO GAIN ACCESS TO AN ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT:**

9 **(I) OPENED AT THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION'S BEHEST; OR**

10 **(II) PROVIDED BY THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION;**

11 **(2) PROHIBIT OR RESTRICT AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION FROM**
12 **VIEWING, ACCESSING, OR UTILIZING INFORMATION ABOUT A STUDENT, AN**
13 **APPLICANT, OR A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT THAT:**

14 **(I) CAN BE OBTAINED WITHOUT ACCESS INFORMATION;**

15 **(II) IS AVAILABLE IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN; OR**

16 **(III) IS AVAILABLE TO THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AS THE**
17 **RESULT OF ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN INDEPENDENTLY BY THE STUDENT;**

18 **(3) CREATE A DUTY REQUIRING AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION TO**
19 **SEARCH OR MONITOR THE ACTIVITY OF A PERSONAL ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT;**

20 **(4) MAKE AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION LIABLE FOR FAILING TO**
21 **REQUEST OR REQUIRE A STUDENT, AN APPLICANT, OR A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT TO**
22 **GRANT ACCESS TO, ALLOW OBSERVATION OF, OR DISCLOSE INFORMATION THAT**
23 **ALLOWS ACCESS TO OR OBSERVATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S PERSONAL**
24 **ELECTRONIC ACCOUNT;**

25 **(5) PROHIBIT A STUDENT, AN APPLICANT, OR A PROSPECTIVE**
26 **STUDENT FROM ALLOWING AN ATHLETIC COACH OR ADMINISTRATOR TO VIEW THE**
27 **STUDENT'S, APPLICANT'S, OR PROSPECTIVE STUDENT'S PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE**
28 **COMMUNICATIONS; OR**

29 **(6) APPLY TO:**

1 **(I) A SUSPECTED CRIMINAL ACTIVITY INVESTIGATION INTO**
2 **THE PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS OF A STUDENT, AN APPLICANT, OR A**
3 **PROSPECTIVE STUDENT THAT IS PERFORMED BY A PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT OR**
4 **POLICE AGENCY OF AN INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION; OR**

5 **(II) AN INVESTIGATION, AN INQUIRY, OR A DETERMINATION**
6 **RELATING TO THE PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS OF A STUDENT, AN**
7 **APPLICANT, OR A PROSPECTIVE STUDENT THAT IS CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE**
8 **WITH THE HEALTH OR PUBLIC SAFETY ADMINISTRATION ASSESSMENT POLICY OR**
9 **PROTOCOL OF AN INSTITUTION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION.**

10 **(D) (1) SUBJECT TO PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, AN**
11 **INDIVIDUAL WHO IS THE SUBJECT OF A VIOLATION OF ANY PROVISION OF THIS**
12 **SECTION MAY:**

13 **(I) BRING A CIVIL ACTION TO ENJOIN THE VIOLATION OR FOR**
14 **DAMAGES;**

15 **(II) ADD A CLAIM FOR DAMAGES TO AN ACTION SEEKING**
16 **INJUNCTIVE RELIEF; AND**

17 **(III) RECOVER NOT MORE THAN \$1,000 IN DAMAGES PLUS**
18 **REASONABLE ATTORNEY'S FEES AND COURT COSTS.**

19 **(2) AN INDIVIDUAL MAY NOT BRING AN ACTION FOR DAMAGES OR**
20 **ADD A CLAIM FOR DAMAGES TO AN ACTION SEEKING INJUNCTIVE RELIEF UNDER**
21 **THIS SECTION UNTIL AT LEAST 60 DAYS AFTER MAKING A WRITTEN DEMAND OF THE**
22 **ALLEGED VIOLATOR FOR NOT MORE THAN \$1,000 THAT:**

23 **(I) INCLUDES REASONABLE DOCUMENTATION OF THE**
24 **VIOLATION; AND**

25 **(II) IS SERVED IN THE MANNER PROVIDED FOR SERVICE OF**
26 **PROCESS IN A CIVIL ACTION UNDER THE MARYLAND RULES OR BY CERTIFIED MAIL**
27 **TO THE RESIDENCE OR PRINCIPAL OFFICE OR PLACE OF BUSINESS OF THE ALLEGED**
28 **VIOLATOR.**

29 **(3) AN ACTION UNDER THIS SUBSECTION MAY BE BROUGHT IN THE**
30 **DISTRICT COURT FOR THE COUNTY IN WHICH:**

31 **(I) THE ALLEGED VIOLATION OCCURRED; OR**

32 **(II) THE ALLEGED VIOLATOR RESIDES OR HAS A PRINCIPAL**
33 **OFFICE OR PLACE OF BUSINESS.**

1 **(E) IT IS AN AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE TO ANY CLAIM UNDER THIS SECTION**
2 **THAT THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION ACTED TO COMPLY WITH THE**
3 **REQUIREMENTS OF A FEDERAL OR STATE LAW.**

4 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June
5 1, 2015.