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Senate Committee Advances “Anonymous Reporting” School Safety Legislation

SANTA FE – The Senate Education Committee today advanced legislation to help local schools and law enforcement better identify potential safety threats. Senate Bill 248 (SB 248), sponsored by Senator Steven Neville (District 2-San Juan), would require the Public Education Department to develop and implement a school-specific “anonymous reporting program” for the reporting of harmful activity that has occurred, is occurring, or may occur at school, or that involves a school employee or student.

“When it comes to school safety, students are often the best source of information about potential threats,” said Senator Neville. “This program would provide a way for students and staff to identify and anonymously report warning signs from those who may be at risk of harming themselves or others. Following the tragic events at Aztec High School in 2017 that took the lives of two students, we were again reminded that we must take every threat seriously and do all we can to prevent these acts of violence from happening again.”

According to analysis from the Legislative Education Study Committee, interest and support for anonymous reporting programs has increased significantly since the 2018 shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida, when warning signs regarding the shooter’s violent intentions were missed. At least six states – New Jersey, Kentucky, North Carolina, Florida, Pennsylvania, and Nevada – have already enacted anonymous reporting program systems.

SB 248 will now advance to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

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