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1	S.16
2	Introduced by Senator Sears
3	Referred to Committee on
4	Date:
5	Subject: Human services; child welfare; mandatory reporters
6	Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to repeal the
7	four-pronged exception that permits clergy to not report child abuse and
8	neglect when it is received in confidence while acting as a spiritual advisor.
9	Additionally, the bill repeals a related provision mandating the reporting of
10	information that falls outside of the exception even though the information
11	may have also been learned in a manner that falls within the exception.
12 13	An act relating to repealing the exception for clergy to report child abuse and neglect
14	It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:
15	Sec. 1. 33 V.S.A. § 4913 is amended to read:
16	§ 4913. REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT; REMEDIAL
17	ACTION

* * *

1	(j) A member of the clergy shall not be required to make a report under this
2	section if the report would be based upon information received in a
3	communication that is:
4	(1) made to a member of the clergy acting in his or her capacity as
5	spiritual advisor;
6	(2) intended by the parties to be confidential at the time the
7	communication is made;
8	(3) intended by the communicant to be an act of contrition or a matter of
9	conscience; and
10	(4) required to be confidential by religious law, doctrine, or tenet.
11	[Repealed.]
12	(k) When a member of the clergy receives information about abuse or
13	neglect of a child in a manner other than as described in subsection (j) of this
14	section, he or she is required to report on the basis of that information even
15	though he or she may have also received a report of abuse or neglect about the
16	same person or incident in the manner described in subsection (j) of this
17	section. [Repealed.]
18	* * *
19	Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE
20	This act shall take effect on July 1, 2023.