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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 237

Offered January 24, 2000

Directing the Virginia Commission on Youth to study the incidence and treatment of traumatic brain injury among individuals in Virginia's 21 juvenile detention homes.

Patrons—Scott, Darner, Dillard, Hamilton, Jackson and Jones, J.C.

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, according to a recent study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 5.3 million Americans, almost two percent of the population, currently live with disabilities resulting from brain injury; and

WHEREAS, traumatic brain injury can affect a person cognitively, physically and emotionally; and

WHEREAS, disrupted cognitive functioning can result in diminished ability to understand and control behavior; and

WHEREAS, a number of studies have shown that males are about twice as likely to incur traumatic brain injury as females and the highest rates of injuries are found in persons 15 to 24 years of age; and

WHEREAS, children and adolescents with traumatic brain injury are often inappropriately classified as having learning disabilities, emotional disturbance or mental retardation; and

WHEREAS, the incidence of traumatic brain injury among individuals in the juvenile justice system is unknown; and

WHEREAS, identification of the incidence and effects of brain injury among individuals in juvenile detention centers must precede development of more effective strategies to improve the outcomes for these young people; and

WHEREAS, three successful programs in Virginia and Oregon have improved behavioral control and diminished aggression among those who have sustained traumatic brain injury; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia Commission on Youth be directed to study the incidence and treatment of traumatic brain injury among individuals in Virginia's 21 juvenile detention homes. In addition, the Commission shall determine the effectiveness of current treatment protocols and the feasibility of developing screening tools to identify, appropriately classify and treat individuals in juvenile detention homes whose behaviors are the result of traumatic brain injury.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Virginia Commission on Youth for this study, upon request.

The Virginia Commission on Youth shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 2001 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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