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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 239
AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the House Committee on Rules
on February 11, 2000)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Tata)

Requesting the Board of Education, in cooperation with the Virginia School Boards Association, and the Virginia High School League, to study commercial promotional activities in high schools.

WHEREAS, across the country, public schools are looking for ways to enhance their funding, particularly for expensive activities such as sports; and

WHEREAS, secondary school athletics have grown in influence in middle and high schools and have become over emphasized, with many high school students in the United States concentrating more on excelling in sports than in academic achievement; and

WHEREAS, with the escalating costs of equipping teams at the middle and high school levels, informal deals with athletic apparel companies have become very tempting; and

WHEREAS, many athletic apparel companies underwrite or sponsor athletic summer camps where outstanding young athletes are able to showcase their talents to high school, college, and professional team coaches; and

WHEREAS, recently, controversies have arisen concerning the sponsorships of these summer camps and incentives provided to schools and coaches to entice star players to attend these camps and to wear the apparel, particularly shoes, of the sponsoring corporation; and

WHEREAS, many of the teams, coaches, and players who participate in these arrangements consider the gifts to be appropriate and of great benefit in eliminating tiring and tedious fund-raising activities; and

WHEREAS, in some instances, the potential for serious conflict between principals, teams, school boards, coaches, athletic association officials, parents, and players are great, with parents and players receiving a different offer than the coaches and schools; and

WHEREAS, school districts in other states have experienced the embarrassment and difficulties of resolving these informal agreements; and

WHEREAS, some of these school districts appear to be far ahead of Virginia's school divisions in implementing policies to manage these situations; and

WHEREAS, these issues must be addressed in Virginia before becoming high profile, public debates; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Board of Education, in cooperation with the Virginia School Boards Association and the Virginia High School League, be requested to study commercial promotional activities in high schools.

In conducting its study, the Board shall examine the legal and ethical issues related to athletic apparel companies and other companies providing gifts to schools and individuals as a quid pro quo for some advertising benefit, such as displaying the logo on school property and having a team or teams wear the company's apparel. The Board shall study disclosure issues, player eligibility issues, parental rights issues, school finance considerations, contract issues, and the benefits and drawbacks of advertising displays.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Board, upon request.

The Board of Education shall complete its work in time to submit its written 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.