

2000 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 257

Offered January 24, 2000

Requesting the Virginia Housing Study Commission, with assistance from the Virginia Interagency Action Council for the Homeless, to study the number and needs of homeless persons in the Commonwealth and make recommendations to foster their self-sufficiency and their participation in the current economic expansion.

Patrons—Stump, Almand, Cantor, Diamonstein, Drake, Hall, Phillips, Scott, Williams and Woodrum;
Senator: Mims

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has identified homelessness as a concern; and
WHEREAS, it is estimated that more than 55,000 Virginians are currently homeless; and
WHEREAS, homeless persons living in rural areas are often "invisible" because, although they have no home of their own, their family and friends may provide temporary shelter; and
WHEREAS, many rural residents are reluctant to ask for assistance, despite great need and hardship; and

WHEREAS, there are fewer emergency shelters and community services facilities in rural areas than in urban or suburban areas from which homeless persons could seek assistance and which facilities could, in turn, ascertain and address the needs of the homeless in such communities; and

WHEREAS, changing economic conditions can have a fiscal effect on residents of rural areas, with less diverse economic bases, even more profound than on residents of urban and suburban areas; and

WHEREAS, many rural areas are isolated and difficult to reach; and
WHEREAS, this isolation may result in limited knowledge on the part of many rural homeless persons of supportive services which could assist them; and

WHEREAS, without receiving supportive services and assistance, such as mental and physical health care, job training, child care, education, and transportation, homeless persons are likely to remain homeless; and

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of the Commonwealth and its citizens to assist those rural Virginians who are now homeless to become self-sufficient and to enjoy the blessings of prosperity experienced by so many of their fellow Virginians; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia Housing Study Commission, with assistance from the Virginia Interagency Action Council for the Homeless, be requested to study the number and needs of homeless persons in rural areas of the Commonwealth and make recommendations to foster their self-sufficiency and their participation in the current economic expansion.

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

The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and report on its progress 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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