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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 303

Offered January 24, 2000

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study homicides of the elderly.

Patron—O'Brien

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, most older Americans will need a caregiver at some point in their lives; and

WHEREAS, the aging demographics of the United States will lead to more caregiving situations where dependent elders are vulnerable to various types of abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, only recently have researchers and clinicians turned their attention to elder mistreatment and little study, if any, has focused on deaths as a direct result of elder mistreatment; and

WHEREAS, the incidence of fatal elder mistreatment is unknown, and past experience with child mistreatment fatalities suggest that vital statistics alone are not enough to estimate fatalities from abuse and neglect; and

WHEREAS, for example, there is thought that undetected homicides of the elderly may be uncovered by examining the fraudulent diversion of social security benefits, but there is a need to investigate undetected elderly homicide in order to develop information on the offenders, their victims, motives, means of death, investigative approaches and resources, indicators and awareness; and

WHEREAS, after such information is developed, law-enforcement professionals can be trained in such adult abuse issues, learn investigative techniques, and offer adult protective services; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study homicides of the elderly. The joint subcommittee shall be composed of seven legislative members as follows: four members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker; and three members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall investigate undetected elderly homicide in order to develop information on the offenders, their victims, motives, means of death, investigative approaches and resources, indicators and awareness.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$8,750.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint subcommittee, upon request.

The joint subcommittee 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.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the study.

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