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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 166

Offered January 24, 2000

Establishing the Metropolitan Hampton Roads Regional Urban Services Study Commission to study the feasibility of establishing a regional administrative agency to provide urban services in the Hampton Roads region.

Patron—Quayle

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Virginia's unique authorization of independent cities predates the eighteenth century when essential urban services could be provided effectively and efficiently by city governments, leaving rural counties to their conduct of agrarian pursuits; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's burgeoning population has concentrated in twentieth century conurbations, designated metropolitan areas, where essential urban services must be developed, funded and shared by many competing local governments; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth must ultimately ensure that a metropolitan area can provide five essential regional urban services effectively and efficiently by:

- 1. Managing wastewater and its reuse;
2. Managing solid waste collection, disposal and recycling;
3. Providing a potable water supply;
4. Maintaining transportation networks employing highways, waterways and elements of mass transit;
and
5. Coordinating regional land use planning and urban growth management among constituent cities, towns and counties; and

WHEREAS, a metropolitan area of 2,000 square miles with 1.5 million residents, housed in a cluster of 15 diverse cities, counties and towns, has coalesced around the Hampton Roads harbor where population growth and urban expansion persist, challenging the region to provide essential urban services; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That a Metropolitan Hampton Roads Urban Services Study Commission be established to study the feasibility of establishing a regional administrative agency to provide urban services in the Hampton Roads region. The Commission shall be composed of nine members, which shall include five legislative members and four nonlegislative members as follows: two members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; three members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker; the Chairman of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission; the Chairman of the Hampton Roads Sanitation District Commission; the Chairman of the Hampton Roads Transportation District Commission, and the Suffolk District member of the Commonwealth Transportation Board. Members of the Commission on Local Government may serve as nonvoting, ex officio members.

In conducting its study, the Commission shall seek answers to 11 questions:

- 1. Would it be feasible to create a regional administrative agency and from the outset specify that its sources of revenue would be limited to fees for services rendered, grants from federal and state agencies and private funds accepted by the Metropolitan Council? Beyond these sources of revenue, the Metropolitan Council would possess no taxing authority.
2. Would "Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council" be an appropriate name for this regional administrative agency, and would this name properly signify a political subdivision of this Commonwealth and help to identify southeastern Virginia in its quest for economic diversification?
3. Would a governing body of 11 members be adequate to carry out assigned duties and functions of this administrative Metropolitan Council?
4. Would it be appropriate for the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate and the House of Delegates, to name the 11 members of the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council?
5. Would it be practical for the Governor to nominate a resident member of the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council from each of the 11 Senate Districts into which the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Area is divided?
6. Would it be reasonable to assume that, ultimately, the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council could assume administrative responsibility for providing these five essential regional urban services:
a. Managing wastewater and its reuse;
b. Providing a unified potable water supply;
c. Maintaining, in conjunction with the Commonwealth Transportation Board, a metropolitan

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60 transportation network employing arterial roadways, waterways and elements of an urban mass transit  
61 system;

62 d. Managing solid waste, including collection, disposal and recycling; and

63 e. Coordinating regional physical development through land use planning, municipal zoning and  
64 urban growth management policies?

65 7. Would it be feasible to transfer operations of the Hampton Roads Sanitation District to the  
66 Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council?

67 8. Would it be feasible to transfer staff operations of the Hampton Roads Planning District to the  
68 Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council while retaining the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission  
69 as an official advisory body?

70 9. Would it be feasible to transfer operations of the Hampton Roads Transportation District to the  
71 Hampton Roads Regional Council while retaining the Hampton Roads Transportation District  
72 Commission as an official advisory body?

73 10. Would it be feasible to grant authority to the Hampton Roads Regional Council to unify  
74 operations related to solid waste collection, disposal and recycling?

75 11. Would it be feasible to grant authority to the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council to unify  
76 operations related to the provision of a metropolitan potable water supply?

77 The Commission shall conduct at least two advertised public hearings each year in the Hampton  
78 Roads area each year.

79 The direct costs of the study shall not exceed \$12,500.

80 The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. Technical assistance  
81 shall be provided by the Commission on Local Government. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall  
82 provide assistance to the Commission, upon request.

83 The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the  
84 Governor and the 2002 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division  
85 of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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