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**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 199**  
**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE**  
(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Rules  
on February 14, 2000)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Miller, Y.B.)

*Requesting the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to study the feasibility of tracking college and university completion rates separately from college and university graduation rates.*

WHEREAS, many states make a distinction between graduation rates and completion rates at institutions of higher learning; and

WHEREAS, graduation rates are typically described as the percentage of first-time, full-time students who earn baccalaureate degrees within six years of enrolling at a higher education institution; and

WHEREAS, completion rate reflects both students who graduate from the institution in which they first enroll and students who transfer and graduate from another public institution; and

WHEREAS, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia collects data from the public colleges and universities on the percentage of full-time students returning to their second year and the percentage of students graduating within four years, five years and six years of enrollment; and

WHEREAS, analysis of graduation rates is designed to help institutions of higher education meet federal requirements for reporting institutional performance, pursuant to the federal Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act of 1990; and

WHEREAS, although these figures provide valuable insights into the performance of higher education institutions, they must be considered in relation to other factors at each institution; and

WHEREAS, institutions differ markedly in their missions and in terms of the nature of their students, such as their academic qualifications, financial well-being, and degree-completion intentions, and the nature of the institutions' programs; and

WHEREAS, making a distinction between an institution's graduation rate and its completion rate would provide additional insight into an institution's performance; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia be requested to study the feasibility of tracking college and university completion rates separately from college and university graduation rates.

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

The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia 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.