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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 652

Offered January 10, 2001
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Establishing a joint subcommittee to study ways to increase the availability of skilled care for seniors, especially in an in-home setting.

Patron—Blevins

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the number of Americans age 65 years and older, especially those 85 years and older, is increasing every year; and

WHEREAS, new medical discoveries and improvements in health care have extended the life expectancy of many Americans; and

WHEREAS, older Americans want and deserve to be able to "age in place" as much as possible in appropriate settings that enhance their life; and

WHEREAS, many assisted living facilities are being developed to serve the needs of seniors who may need only companionship and limited assistance, but the cost is still prohibitive for many on limited pensions and income; and

WHEREAS, the provision of many of these services in the home and community could help to protect the independent lifestyles desired by most people as well as delay entrance into more costly, institutional care; and

WHEREAS, nursing home care averages today around $153 per day for a resident, a staggering $55,845 per year; and

WHEREAS, new staffing levels and safety requirements for nursing homes and other long-term care facilities that help to ensure residents are receiving adequate care will drive those costs higher in the future; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that we find new and innovative methods to assist our elderly citizens to remain as independent as long as possible and maintain a quality lifestyle for those years; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study ways to increase the availability of skilled care for seniors, especially in an in-home setting. The joint subcommittee shall consist of 11 members, which shall include eight legislative members and three nonlegislative members as follows: three members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; five members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates; one representative of the health care industry to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; and two representatives of the health care industry to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall examine ways to increase the availability of skilled care for seniors, especially in an in-home setting. The joint subcommittee shall examine, but not be limited to, the feasibility and advisability of tax deductions for adult day care similar to the current child care deduction, expansion of respite care programs, and the claim of an elderly parent cared for in the home as a dependent with either a higher or no cap on such parent's income.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed $11,500.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. Technical assistance shall be provided by the Joint Commission on Health Care. 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 written findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 2002 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.

INTRODUCED

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