

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA -- 2001 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 773

Directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to analyze the growth in spending by the Commonwealth since Fiscal Year 1981.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 6, 2001

Agreed to by the Senate, February 21, 2001

WHEREAS, since Fiscal Year 1981, general fund expenditures by the Commonwealth have grown from \$5.7 billion to \$25.1 billion in Fiscal Year 2001; and

WHEREAS, the growth in spending by the Commonwealth over the past two decades has significantly exceeded the Commonwealth's population growth and the rate of inflation; and

WHEREAS, the baseline budget of the Commonwealth has increased and grown dramatically during the past several years, to the sum of a \$50 billion biennial budget; and

WHEREAS, a budget of this size, scope and complexity requires the detailed and comprehensive supervision of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, while the budget is drafted and approved based on the most accurate fiscal and budgetary forecasts available during the brief legislative sessions, data may change in response to changing economic conditions subsequent to the session; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth provides, in addition to state-run agencies, extensive funds to private organizations and groups to advance legitimate state interests and the public policy goals of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly, while not exercising daily supervision and control of these private organizations and their operations, nevertheless retains its constitutional obligation and mandate to exercise sound stewardship of state funds on behalf of the people of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, this sound stewardship requires that a full, complete and accurate accounting of the spending of state funds be made by any private organization that receives funding from the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, an accurate and comprehensive analysis of the Commonwealth's spending trends over the past two decades would be a highly valuable aid to the fulfillment of the General Assembly's constitutional duty to appropriate the revenue derived from the taxpayers of the Commonwealth and its duty to protect the taxpayers from excessive spending and taxation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission be directed to analyze the growth in spending by the Commonwealth since Fiscal Year 1981. In conducting the study, the Commission shall consider, among other things, (i) an identification and analysis of spending functions and programs that could be consolidated with other programs without diminishing the quality of the services provided to the citizens of the Commonwealth; (ii) an identification and analysis of those spending functions or programs that no longer have a distinct and discernible mission or are not performing their missions efficiently; (iii) an identification and analysis of the state programs that have had the largest impact on the growth of state spending over the prior 10 biennia, in dollar terms; (iv) an identification and analysis of the programs growing the fastest in percentage terms; (v) for the programs identified as the largest and fastest-growing, comparisons of the growth in spending on those programs to the rate of increase in inflation and the growth in populations served by those programs over a comparable time period; (vi) an analysis of the causes for the growth in spending on the largest and fastest-growing programs, and whether the growth in spending appears rationally related to the rates of increase in inflation and populations served; (vii) an analysis of the use of performance budgeting, performance measurement, and program evaluation information in the legislative budgeting process and how the information may be more systematically used for program improvement and budget decision-making by legislators; (viii) a detailed analysis of the operations and expenditures of state funds by private organizations and groups, for the purpose of demanding a full, complete and accurate accounting of those funds, as well as demonstrable evidence that the public policy goals have been accomplished by their expenditure; (ix) policies and strategies that can be instituted or restructured to more efficiently and effectively spend such funds; (x) the cancellation of programs that fail to meet the stated purpose of their funding, or fail to provide a satisfactory accounting of their expenditures; and (xi) such other related issues as it deems appropriate.

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

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall submit preliminary findings and recommendations by November 30, 2001, to the Governor and the 2002 Session of the General Assembly, and the Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its final written findings and

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recommendations by November 30, 2002, to the Governor and the 2003 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.