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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 803

Offered January 19, 2001

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study the social, economic, and policy considerations regarding the establishment of a living wage for employees of the Commonwealth.

Patron—Grayson

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, living wage laws require employers to pay wages that are above federal or state minimum wage level; and

WHEREAS, the living wage level is usually the wage a full-time worker would need to earn to support a family above the federal poverty line, ranging from 100 to 130 percent of the poverty measurement; and

WHEREAS, despite a surging economy in recent years, many low-income working families continue to struggle to make ends meet; and

WHEREAS, the average income of many low-income working families, adjusted for inflation, is 11 percent lower than it was in 1979, and, at \$14,900 in 1997, was about \$1,300 below that year's poverty line for a two-parent family with children; and

WHEREAS, tragically, in many communities, janitors, school bus drivers, food service, security, child care and other workers in public sector jobs are paid wages too low to keep their families above the poverty level, and, for them, health insurance, paid vacations, paid sick leave and pensions are only dreams; and

WHEREAS, the provision of appropriate compensation is necessary to attract and retain the highest quality public sector employees; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of any living wage for the Commonwealth's employees requires the careful consideration of a plethora of diverse and complex issues; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study the social, economic, and policy considerations regarding the establishment of a living wage for employees of the Commonwealth. The joint subcommittee shall consist of seven members, which shall include six legislative members and one ex officio member as follows: four 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; two members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; and the Director of the Department of Human Resource Management or his designee to serve ex officio with full voting privileges.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall, among other things, (i) examine living wage statutes in other states, (ii) calculate and make recommendations regarding an appropriate living wage for the Commonwealth's employees, and (iii) consider the various regional economic challenges facing public sector employees in Virginia.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$ 3,150.

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 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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