

2001 SESSION

LEGISLATION NOT PREPARED BY DLS
INTRODUCED

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 810

Offered January 19, 2001

Establishing a Joint Commission on Prescription Drug Assistance to develop ways and means to provide prescription drug assistance to needy senior citizens and to coordinate state and federal programs providing such assistance.

Patrons—Jones, S.C., Abbitt, Albo, Amundson, Bennett, Blevins, Bolvin, Broman, Bryant, Byron, Callahan, Cox, Cranwell, Day, Devolites, Dillard, Drake, Dudley, Griffith, Hargrove, Harris, Howell, Hull, Ingram, Joannou, Jones, J.C., Katzen, Kilgore, Landes, Larrabee, Louderback, Marshall, McClure, McDonnell, McEachin, McQuigg, Melvin, Morgan, Nixon, O'Bannon, O'Brien, Parrish, Phillips, Pollard, Purkey, Putney, Rapp, Reid, Rhodes, Robinson, Rollison, Rust, Sherwood, Shuler, Spruill, Stump, Suit, Tate, Wardrup, Ware, Weatherholtz, Welch, Williams and Wright; Senator: Lambert

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, rapid scientific advances in biochemistry, molecular biology, cell biology, immunology, genetics, and information technology are transforming drug discovery and development; and

WHEREAS, effective pharmaceuticals improve the quality of life for Virginia's elderly citizens and help contain the health care costs associated with aging; and

WHEREAS, improved access to pharmaceuticals for needy elderly citizens is a worthwhile goal, while also continuing the flow of new, more effective, life-saving and life-enhancing prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, many elderly Virginians cannot afford necessary prescription drug coverage; and

WHEREAS, Medicare does not provide coverage for prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid does not cover the cost of prescription drugs for the neediest elderly Virginians; and

WHEREAS, both major-party presidential candidates in the campaign of 2000 promised to provide prescription drug assistance to needy elderly citizens, as did most candidates for Congress from both parties, making it highly likely that the new United States Congress and new Administration will take action on prescription drugs in the upcoming year; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia must be prepared to coordinate its state effort to provide prescription drug assistance with the likely federal effort, to avoid duplication, waste of human and fiscal resources, or the need to change state programs established prematurely before the likely new federal programs were established; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a Joint Commission on Prescription Drug Assistance be established to develop ways and means to provide prescription drug assistance to needy senior citizens and to coordinate state and federal programs providing such assistance. The Commission shall be comprised of 14 members to be appointed as follows: six members of the House of Delegates to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, in accordance with Rule 16 of the Rules of the House of Delegates; four members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; and four citizen members to be appointed as follows: two by the Speaker of the House, one by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections, and one by the Governor.

The Commission shall examine (i) the best ways to provide prescription drug assistance to those elderly Virginians who cannot afford to purchase such assistance on their own, (ii) the current scope of coverage, or lack thereof, in major programs including Medicare and Medicaid, (iii) likely federal legislation and the most efficient manner for the Commonwealth to coordinate its programs with coming federal programs to provide prescription drug assistance, and (iv) such other matters as are relevant to the Commission's mission.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$10,000.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission for this study, upon request.

The Commission shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly in time for any recommended legislation to be submitted to 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.

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