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## SENATE BILL NO. 1076

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE  
(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Education and Health  
on February 2, 2001)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Maxwell)

*A BILL to require a study of the duties and responsibilities of local health departments to assist special populations during emergencies and disasters.*

Whereas, emergency situations and disasters occur in spite of extensive efforts to prevent and avoid them; and

Whereas, planning, training, and coordination of services help reduce the loss of life and property; and

Whereas, special populations, such as the elderly and the disabled, may require specific services from government during its response to an emergency situation or disaster; and

Whereas, because many of these special populations are served through agencies within the Secretariat of Health and Human Resources, and the special assistance that such persons may require should be coordinated to ensure the prompt delivery of necessary services and to maximize efficiency; and

Whereas, the Department of Emergency Management has the statutory responsibility to "prepare and maintain a State Emergency Operations Plan for disaster response and recovery operations," and each locality "shall be responsible for local disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery," with the assistance of the Department of Emergency Management; and

Whereas, it is important to the health and welfare of all citizens, especially special populations, during emergency situations and disasters to ensure that the roles of state and local agencies are clear so that the needs of the people may be met; now, therefore, be it

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

*1. That the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, in consultation with the Department of Emergency Management, shall study the duties and responsibilities of local health departments to assist special populations during emergencies and disasters. In conducting the study, the Secretary shall, among other things, (i) assess the adequacy of state and local emergency management plans and preparedness to manage special populations during emergency situations and disasters; (ii) determine the availability of caregivers, shelters, facilities, and resources required to serve elderly or disabled citizens who are not mobile or who depend on life support systems; and (iii) suggest ways to correct any identified deficiencies. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Secretary of Health and Human Resources for this study, upon request.*

*The Secretary of Health and Human Resources shall complete his work in time to submit his written findings and recommendations by November 15, 2001, 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.*