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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 372

Senate Amendments in [] — February 6, 2001

Establishing the Metropolitan Hampton Roads Regional Urban Services Study Commission to study the feasibility of establishing a regional administrative agency to provide urban services in the Hampton Roads region.

Patron Prior to Engrossment—Senator Quayle

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Virginia's unique authorization of independent cities predates the eighteenth century when essential urban services could be provided effectively and efficiently by city governments, leaving rural counties to their conduct of agrarian pursuits; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's burgeoning population has concentrated in twentieth century conurbations, designated metropolitan areas, where essential urban services must be developed, funded and shared by many competing local governments; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth must ultimately ensure that a metropolitan area can provide five essential regional urban services effectively and efficiently by:

1. Managing wastewater and its reuse;
 2. Managing solid waste collection, disposal and recycling;
 3. Providing a potable water supply;
 4. Maintaining transportation networks employing highways, waterways and elements of mass transit;
- and
5. Coordinating regional land use planning and urban growth management among constituent cities, towns and counties; and

WHEREAS, a metropolitan area of 2,000 square miles with 1.5 million residents, housed in a cluster of 15 diverse cities, counties and towns, has coalesced around the Hampton Roads harbor where population growth and urban expansion persist, challenging the region to provide essential urban services; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That a Metropolitan Hampton Roads Urban Services Study Commission be established to study the feasibility of establishing a regional administrative agency to provide urban services in the Hampton Roads region. The Commission shall consist of 12 members, which shall include six legislative members and six nonlegislative and ex officio members as follows: two members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; 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; the chairman of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission and the chairman of the Hampton Roads Sanitation District Commission to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; the chairman of the Hampton Roads Transportation District Commission, the [Suffolk Hampton Roads] District member of the Commonwealth Transportation Board and the executive director of the Southeastern Public Service Authority, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and the executive director of the Commission on Local Government or his designee to serve ex officio with nonvoting privileges.

In conducting its study, the Commission shall seek answers to 11 questions:

1. Would it be feasible to create a regional administrative agency and from the outset specify that its sources of revenue would be limited to fees for services rendered, grants from federal and state agencies, and private funds accepted by the Metropolitan Council? Beyond these sources of revenue, the Metropolitan Council would possess no taxing authority.

2. Would "Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council" be an appropriate name for this regional administrative agency, and would this name properly signify a political subdivision of this Commonwealth and help to identify southeastern Virginia in its quest for economic diversification?

3. Would a governing body of 11 members be adequate to carry out assigned duties and functions of this administrative Metropolitan Council?

4. Would it be appropriate for the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate and the House of Delegates, to name the 11 members of the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council?

5. Would it be practical for the Governor to nominate a resident member of the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council from each of the 11 Senate Districts into which the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Area is divided?

6. Would it be reasonable to assume that, ultimately, the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council could

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59 assume administrative responsibility for providing these five essential regional urban services:
60 a. Managing wastewater and its reuse;
61 b. Providing a unified potable water supply;
62 c. Maintaining, in conjunction with the Commonwealth Transportation Board, a metropolitan
63 transportation network employing arterial roadways, waterways and elements of an urban mass transit
64 system;
65 d. Managing solid waste, including collection, disposal and recycling; and
66 e. Coordinating regional physical development through land use planning, municipal zoning and
67 urban growth management policies?
68 7. Would it be feasible to transfer operations of the Hampton Roads Sanitation District to the
69 Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council?
70 8. Would it be feasible to transfer staff operations of the Hampton Roads Planning District to the
71 Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council while retaining the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
72 as an official advisory body?
73 9. Would it be feasible to transfer operations of the Hampton Roads Transportation District to the
74 Hampton Roads Regional Council while retaining the Hampton Roads Transportation District
75 Commission as an official advisory body?
76 10. Would it be feasible to grant authority to the Hampton Roads Regional Council to unify
77 operations related to solid waste collection, disposal and recycling?
78 11. Would it be feasible to grant authority to the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council to unify
79 operations related to the provision of a metropolitan potable water supply?
80 The Commission shall conduct at least two advertised public hearings each year in the Hampton
81 Roads area.
82 The direct costs of the study shall not exceed \$15,000.
83 The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. Technical assistance
84 shall be provided by the Commission on Local Government. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall
85 provide assistance to the Commission, upon request.
86 The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations [by
87 October 20, 2001,] to the Governor and the 2003 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the
88 procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative
89 documents.
90 Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint
91 Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the
92 study.