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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 384**AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE**

(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Rules
on February 5, 2001)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Hanger)

Directing the Joint Commission on Health Care to study ways to increase the availability of skilled care for seniors, especially in an in-home setting.

WHEREAS, the number of Americans age 65 years and older, especially those 85 years and older, is increasing every year; and

WHEREAS, new medical discoveries and improvements in health care have extended the life expectancy of many Americans; and

WHEREAS, older Americans want and deserve to be able to "age in place" as much as possible in appropriate settings that enhance their life; and

WHEREAS, many assisted living facilities are being developed to serve the needs of seniors who may need only companionship and limited assistance, but the cost is still prohibitive for many on limited pensions and income; and

WHEREAS, the provision of many of these services in the home and community could help to protect the independent lifestyles desired by most people as well as delay entrance into more costly, institutional care; and

WHEREAS, nursing home care currently averages approximately \$153 per day for a resident, a staggering \$55,845 per year; and

WHEREAS, new staffing levels and safety requirements for nursing homes and other long-term care facilities that help to ensure residents are receiving adequate care will drive those costs higher in the future; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that we find new and innovative methods to assist our elderly citizens to remain as independent as long as possible and maintain a quality lifestyle for those years; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Commission on Health Care be directed to study ways to increase the availability of skilled care for seniors, especially in an in-home setting.

In conducting the study, the Commission shall examine ways to increase the availability of skilled care for seniors, especially in an in-home setting. The Commission shall also examine, among other things, the feasibility and advisability of tax deductions for adult day care similar to the current child care deduction, the expansion of respite care programs, and home care of elderly parents as dependents, with either a higher cap or no cap on such parent's income.

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

The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its written findings and recommendations by October 20, 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.