

022908820

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 143

Offered January 9, 2002

Prefiled January 9, 2002

*Encouraging the Virginia Municipal League and the Virginia Association of Counties to communicate to the legislature strategies to effect a better partnership between local and state governments in securing resources to assist volunteer rescue squads and fire departments and in developing strategies for provider recruitment and retention.*

Patrons—Landes, Orrock, Rapp and Wright; Senators: Deeds and Ruff

Referred to Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns

WHEREAS, Virginia has a long history associated with volunteer rescue squads and fire services providers, with the first independent volunteer rescue squad in the country being established in Roanoke, Virginia, in 1928; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of rescue squad and fire service providers in the state are volunteers; and

WHEREAS, the necessity of effective and efficient emergency medical and fire service providers at the local level is integral to the safety and welfare of all Virginians and the establishment of safe and livable communities; and

WHEREAS, social and economic changes are increasingly exerting pressure on volunteer rescue squad and fire service providers to recruit new members and retain present members; and

WHEREAS, these pressures include (i) the aging of the population, (ii) increases in the number of families where both parents work outside of the home, (iii) increases in single parent families, (iv) the rising number of individuals who work outside of the community in which they live, (v) expanded availability and variety of recreational activities, (vi) changes in motivation and social attitudes, (vii) employers who are less willing to grant time off for volunteer work, (viii) increased concern among potential volunteers about injuries and infectious diseases, (ix) rapid growth in traditionally rural areas, and (x) an overall increase in the demand for volunteers; and

WHEREAS, it is important that these issues be addressed from both a local and a statewide perspective in order to develop strategies that will ensure the proper level of staffing and training for volunteer rescue squads and fire service providers; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Municipal League (VML) is a statewide association of city, town and county governments established in 1905 to improve and assist local governments with a membership including all 40 cities, 155 towns and 14 urban counties in the state; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo), representing 95 local governments, is a statewide organization established in 1934 to promote the interest of the state's counties to better serve the people of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the perspective and organization of VML and VACo offer the opportunity to greatly enhance efforts to develop effective and successful strategies for recruitment and retention in the critical areas of volunteer emergency medical and fire services; and

WHEREAS, VML and VACo have an extensive record of providing strong support to local governments in developing strategies and creating effective partnerships with the legislature to resolve issues facing them; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia Municipal League and the Virginia Association of Counties be encouraged to communicate to the legislature strategies to effect a better partnership between local and state governments in securing resources to assist volunteer rescue squads and fire departments and in developing strategies for provider recruitment and retention; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates shall transmit copies of this resolution to the Virginia Municipal League and the Virginia Association of Counties, requesting that they further disseminate copies of this resolution to their respective constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the Virginia General Assembly in this matter.

INTRODUCED

HJ143