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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 81

Offered January 14, 2004

*Encouraging the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services to provide nonfinancial assistance in developing demonstration projects designed to divert individuals with mental illness, substance abuse, and co-occurring disorders from jail or secure detention.*

Patrons—Mims, Lambert and Puller; Delegates: Brink, Bryant, Hamilton and Morgan

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Joint Commission on Behavioral Health Care and subsequently the Behavioral Health Care Subcommittee of the Joint Commission on Health Care assisted by the Commission on Youth and a Task Force Studying Treatment Options for Offenders with Mental Illness or Substance Abuse Disorders undertook a three-year study as required by Senate Joint Resolution No. 440 (2001), Senate Joint Resolution No. 97 (2002) and House Joint Resolution No. 142 (2002); and

WHEREAS, the Joint Commission on Behavioral Health Care and subsequently the Behavioral Health Care Subcommittee of the Joint Commission on Health Care found in its three-year study that a number of mental health and substance abuse treatment programs undertaken as State and local initiatives in Virginia have served as valuable alternatives or additions to incarceration; and

WHEREAS, information about the existence, structure, and approach of the various mental health and substance abuse initiatives for offenders is not widely known; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services has initiated regional reinvestment projects and a major restructuring effort to provide "a more comprehensive and fully developed system of community-based care"; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, in connection with its reinvestment and restructuring initiatives, is developing a web-based Internet site for evidence-based, best, and promising practices; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, the House concurring, That the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services be encouraged to provide nonfinancial assistance in developing demonstration projects designed to divert individuals with mental illness, substance abuse, and co-occurring disorders from jail or secure detention by incorporating information within its web-based Internet site about such programs.

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