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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 321

Offered January 12, 2005

Prefiled January 11, 2005

*Encouraging the Virginia Dental Association to continue the online job bank for oral health care professionals.*

Patron—Marsh

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, people everywhere are becoming increasingly aware of the significance of oral health care, increasing the demand for oral health care professionals; and

WHEREAS, according to the Academy of General Dentistry, 20 percent of the United State's population reside in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA), and the American Dental Association's 2002 Workforce Study revealed that 37 states consider their current supply of practicing dentists to be lacking in one or more regions in the state; and

WHEREAS, states face challenges in meeting the demand for dentists and dental hygienists, especially in rural areas, and the Medicaid reimbursement rate for covered services is a disincentive to the participation of many dentists; and

WHEREAS, approximately 75 dentists and 122 dental hygienists graduate from state-supported programs in Virginia each year, and 10 of the 43 "underserved" community areas in the Commonwealth have been designated as dental HPSAs; and

WHEREAS, the lack of oral health care professionals limits the delivery of critical oral health care services, particularly in shortage areas, and underscores the need for attention to the distribution of health care providers and the anticipated demand for oral health care as public understanding of its importance increases; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Dental Association's online job bank provides essential information concerning the state's success in addressing the demand for oral health care professionals in shortage areas, and employment opportunities to oral health care professionals; and

WHEREAS, continuing the job bank may help resolve the maldistribution of dentists, increase opportunities to provide outreach services to oral health care professionals seeking employment, and facilitate partnerships between these professionals and underserved communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Virginia Dental Association be encouraged to continue the online job bank for oral health care professionals; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the President and the Executive Director of the Virginia Dental Association, requesting that they further disseminate copies of this resolution to their constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.

INTRODUCED

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