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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 116

Offered January 11, 2006

Prefiled January 11, 2006

Directing the Virginia State Crime Commission to study the need for regulation, training, and funding of animal control officers in the Commonwealth. Report.

Patrons—Kilgore, Albo, Bell, Melvin and Moran; Senators: Howell and Stolle

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, there are an estimated 2,784,880 dogs and cats in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, animal control officers are uniformed officers charged with the enforcement of misdemeanor and felony criminal statutes related to the protection of the public as well as the control and protection of domestic animals; and

WHEREAS, animal control officers routinely deal with livestock, wildlife, poisonous and nonpoisonous exotic animals, dangerous and vicious dogs, hazardous environments, and violent persons; and

WHEREAS, animal control officers carry firearms, have power to issue summonses, secure warrants, and seize personal property; and

WHEREAS, animal control officers presently receive only a minimum of 40 hours of basic instruction; and

WHEREAS, with the current level of pet overpopulation and the rise in reports of aggressive dogs and attacks upon humans, the responsibility placed on animal control officers is a very serious one; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia State Crime Commission be directed to study the need for regulation, training, and funding of animal control officers in the Commonwealth. The Virginia State Crime Commission shall also examine the duties, responsibilities, and budgets of animal control officers in the Commonwealth.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Virginia State Crime Commission for this study, upon request.

The Virginia State Crime Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2006, and the Director shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2007 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the Virginia State Crime Commission intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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