

2006 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 131

Offered January 11, 2006

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Directing the Joint Commission on Health Care to study the continued use of mercury in vaccines. Report.

Patron—Bell

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, exposure to mercury is known to cause neurological problems, including mental retardation, lack of coordination, blindness, seizures, and an inability to speak; and

WHEREAS, young children and fetuses are more sensitive to mercury than adults, and mercury in the mother's body passes to the fetus and can pass to nursing infants through breast milk; and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Public Health Service have called for the removal of mercury from vaccines as soon as possible; and

WHEREAS, mercury continues to be used as a preservative in certain vaccines; and

WHEREAS, recent studies have suggested that mercury in vaccines may be linked to autism in children; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Commission on Health Care be directed to study the continued use of mercury in vaccines.

In conducting its study, the Commission shall investigate the reasons for the continued use of mercury in some vaccines, and determine the safety risks associated with such use. The Commission shall also determine whether vaccines that do not contain mercury are equally effective, in terms of both preventing disease and costs. The study shall include vaccinations given to both children and adults.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Commission by the Department of Health. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission for this study, upon request.

The Commission shall complete its meetings for the first year by November 30, 2006, and for the second year by November 30, 2007, and the chairman 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 next Regular Session of the General Assembly for each year. Each executive summary shall state whether the 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 summaries and reports 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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