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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 37

Offered January 11, 2006

Prefiled January 5, 2006

Directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study the Commonwealth's uninsured population. Report.

Patron—Purkey_____
Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, there are approximately 48 million Americans that lack health insurance; and

WHEREAS, much of the cost of the health care that is provided to uninsured persons is ultimately borne by those with health insurance through higher premiums; and

WHEREAS, while some of the uninsured are not financially able to afford health insurance and would benefit from programs making health insurance more affordable, others are employed and could afford to purchase health insurance but elect not to do so; and

WHEREAS, the Blue Cross & Blue Shield Association reported that in 2004, over 7.2 million of the uninsured had annual incomes exceeding \$75,000, that approximately 16 million of the uninsured were eligible for government health care programs, and that approximately 6 million of the uninsured lacked coverage for just a few months; and

WHEREAS, some of the estimated 8 million people who were uninsured for financial reasons may have been illegal aliens residing in this country; and

WHEREAS, before the Commonwealth can develop an effective policy to address the rising cost of employer-provided health insurance, it needs to address the issue of the extent to which private health insurance bears the cost of health care provided to the uninsured, and addressing that issue requires an understanding of the uninsured population; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission be directed to study the Commonwealth's uninsured population.

In conducting its study, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall address the number of uninsured Virginians, the reasons they do not have health insurance, the duration of periods of being without insurance, their eligibility for health insurance coverage or government health care programs; the health services they utilize, and the effect that the provision of these health services has on private health insurance premiums and government spending. With respect to the analysis of uninsured Virginians, the Commission shall analyze the population by such factors as their age, occupational status, income, and legality of residence.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission by the staff of the Joint Commission on Health Care. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission for this study, upon request.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2006, and the Director of the Commission 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 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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