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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 63

Offered January 11, 2006

Prefiled January 9, 2006

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study immigration issues in the Commonwealth. Report.

Patrons—Parrish; Senator: Colgan

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, a March 2003 U.S. Census report indicates that 33.5 million foreign-born persons live in the United States, representing 11.7% of the U.S. population and 8.1% of Virginia's population in 2000; and

WHEREAS, there is increasing consensus among local government officials that existing resources are inadequate to accommodate the needs of foreign-born persons in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the presence of foreign-born persons and immigrants creates a myriad of issues and challenges for state and local governments in the areas of: cultural diversity, determination of legal status, education, employment, healthcare, housing, law-enforcement, judicial system, Medicaid, public benefits and social services, and there is no one agency or clearinghouse that encompasses the issues relating to immigration; and

WHEREAS, the National Conference of State Legislatures reports that in the first six months of 2005, state legislatures considered almost 300 bills on immigrant and refugee policy issues; and

WHEREAS, it is important that the Commonwealth develop well-thought-out policies to address the many issues that arise regarding immigrant and refugee policy issues facing Virginia; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study immigration issues in the Commonwealth. The joint subcommittee shall identify those issues that are most pressing to Virginia. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of eight members that shall consist of eight legislative members. Members shall be appointed as follows: five members of the House of Delegates to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates and three members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. If a companion joint resolution of the other chamber is agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall be required. The joint subcommittee shall elect a chairman and vice chairman from among its membership, who shall be members of the General Assembly.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall determine the financial and practical impact on the Commonwealth, its local governments and its citizens, of Virginia's increasing immigrant population. The joint subcommittee's areas of determination shall include but are not limited to: the housing market, the healthcare and Medicaid systems, law-enforcement agencies, the judicial system, public education, public benefits, property values, social services, transportation and the economic well-being of all citizens. The joint subcommittee shall examine the powers and duties of state and local governments in relationship to these issues and determine whether increased authority should be granted in certain areas. The joint subcommittee shall determine what areas related to immigration are those reserved exclusively to the federal government and identify strategies to increase the involvement of the federal government in those areas.

Administrative staff support shall be provided by the Office of the Clerk of the House of Delegates. Legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by the joint subcommittee shall be provided by the Division of Legislative Services. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint subcommittee for this study, upon request.

The joint subcommittee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2006 interim, and the direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$8,000 without approval as set out in this resolution. Approval for unbudgeted nonmember-related expenses shall require the written authorization of the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk. If a companion joint resolution of the other chamber is agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall be required.

No recommendation of the joint subcommittee shall be adopted if a majority of the House members or a majority of the Senate members appointed to the joint subcommittee (i) vote against the recommendation and (ii) vote for the recommendation to fail notwithstanding the majority vote of the joint subcommittee.

The joint subcommittee shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2006, and the chairman shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and

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59 recommendations no later than the first day of the 2007 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The
60 executive summary shall state whether the joint subcommittee intends to submit to the General
61 Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or
62 Senate document. The executive summary and the report shall be submitted as provided in the
63 procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents
64 and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

65 Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint
66 Rules Committee. The Committee may approve or disapprove expenditures for this study, extend or
67 delay the period for the conduct of the study, or authorize additional meetings during the 2006 interim.