

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 126

Continuing the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Commonwealth's Program for Prisoner Reentry to Society. Report.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 9, 2006
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 6, 2006

WHEREAS, Senate Joint Resolution No. 273 (2005) established the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Commonwealth's Program for Prisoner Reentry to Society; and

WHEREAS, the joint subcommittee has recommended several pieces of legislation creating or expanding programs for Virginia prisoners reentering society; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's proposed 2006-2008 budget includes approximately \$4 million towards transitional programs recommended by the joint subcommittee; and

WHEREAS, the joint subcommittee has developed a greater understanding of the issues facing recently released prisoners that would enable the subcommittee to monitor more effectively the progress of these new programs; and

WHEREAS, incarceration and issues facing prisoners returning to society affect all elements of society within the Commonwealth, including children, families, communities, and the economy; and

WHEREAS, the current members of the joint subcommittee agree that adding a representative of the Attorney General's office would be beneficial to the work of the subcommittee; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Commonwealth's Program for Prisoner Reentry to Society be continued. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of 17 members that shall consist of six legislative members, four nonlegislative citizen members, and seven ex officio members. Members shall be appointed as follows: two members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; four 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; one nonlegislative citizen member, who shall be a member of a faith-based or other nonprofit organization working with offenders, and one representative of local government or member of an organization that provides services to victims of crime to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; and one nonlegislative citizen member, who shall be a member of a faith-based or other nonprofit organization working with offenders, and one representative of local government or member of an organization that provides services to victims of crime to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates. The Secretary of Public Safety or his designee; the Director of the Department of Corrections or his designee; the Superintendent of Correctional Education or his designee; the Commissioner of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services or his designee; the Commissioner of Social Services or his designee; and the Commissioner of the Virginia Employment Commission or his designee shall serve ex officio with nonvoting privileges. The current membership shall be increased by adding the Attorney General or his designee to serve ex officio with nonvoting privileges.

Nonlegislative citizen members of the joint subcommittee shall be citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The current members appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules shall continue to serve until replaced. The current members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates shall be subject to reappointment. Vacancies shall be filled by the original appointing authority. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk, nonlegislative citizen members shall only be reimbursed for travel originating and ending within the Commonwealth of Virginia for the purpose of attending meetings. 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 continue to identify and develop strategies to address key needs and overcome barriers for offenders, prior to and upon leaving prison, to reduce the incidence of reincarceration and increase their successful social adaptation and integration into their communities. The joint subcommittee shall also identify and develop strategies to overcome the adverse effects of incarceration on children, families, communities, and the economy, and monitor any budget provisions and changes in the law recommended over the past year to ensure maximum effectiveness.

Administrative staff support shall continue to be provided by the Office of the Clerk of the Senate. Legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by the joint subcommittee shall continue to 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.

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The joint subcommittee shall be limited to three meetings for the 2006 interim, and the direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$5,600 without approval as set out in this resolution. Of this amount an estimated \$500 is allocated for speakers, materials, or other resources. 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 Senate members or a majority of the House 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 recommendations no later than the first day of the 2007 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the joint subcommittee 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.

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