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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 419

Offered January 15, 2007

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study the availability and efficacy of gang prevention activities and potential funding opportunities for these activities. Report.

 Patron—Miller

 Unanimous consent to introduce

 Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, according to a report issued in 2006 by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, it was estimated that there were approximately 760,000 gang members and 24,000 active gangs in the United States ; and

WHEREAS, according to a report issued in 2005 by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, gang members committed on average 373,000, or six percent, of the violent victimizations per year, including rape/sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault, between the years 1998 and 2003; and

WHEREAS, as identified in the 2006 U.S. Department of Justice report, there are numerous risk factors related to whether juveniles join gangs including early delinquency, early dating, precocious sexual activity, non-two-parent family structure, poverty, other family members in gangs, low school achievement and commitment, truancy, negative labeling by teachers, lack of a sense of safety in school, associations with delinquent or aggressive peers, drug availability, and gang presence in the community; and

WHEREAS, there are gang prevention programs and activities that address these risk factors; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Attorney General's Office was awarded a grant by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to establish the Richmond Gang Reduction and Intervention Program, which is designed to work with the community on issues of gang prevention, suppression, and intervention; and

WHEREAS, additional funding opportunities may become available to support the implementation of other gang prevention programs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study the availability and efficacy of gang prevention activities and potential funding opportunities for these activities. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of 11 members that shall consist of six legislative members, four nonlegislative citizen members, and one ex officio member. 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; two nonlegislative citizen members, one of whom shall be a law-enforcement officer who focuses on gang activities and one of whom shall be an attorney of the Commonwealth, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; and two nonlegislative citizen members, one of whom shall be the director of a charity or community organization whose mission is gang prevention and intervention, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates. The Attorney General or his designee shall serve ex officio with voting privileges. Nonlegislative citizen members of the joint subcommittee shall be citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. 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 review gang prevention programs that are already in place in Virginia and assess how successful these programs have been and whether they could be implemented elsewhere in the Commonwealth. The availability and rate of success of alternative gang prevention programs that may be adopted in Virginia should also be assessed with particular attention paid to the availability of federal funding for such programs.

Administrative staff support shall 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 be provided by the Division of Legislative Services. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the

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59 joint subcommittee for this study, upon request.

60 The joint subcommittee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2007 interim and four meetings for
61 the 2008 interim, and the direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$7,600 for each year without
62 approval as set out in this resolution. Approval for unbudgeted nonmember-related expenses shall require
63 the written authorization of the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk. If a
64 companion joint resolution of the other chamber is agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall
65 be required.

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

70 The joint subcommittee shall complete its meetings for the first year by November 30, 2007, and for
71 the second year by November 30, 2008, and the chairman shall submit to the Division of Legislative
72 Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first
73 day of the next Regular Session of the General Assembly for each year. Each executive summary shall
74 state whether the joint subcommittee intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor a
75 report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The
76 executive summaries and reports shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of
77 Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be
78 posted on the General Assembly's website.

79 Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint
80 Rules Committee. The Committee may approve or disapprove expenditures for this study, extend or
81 delay the period for the conduct of the study, or authorize additional meetings during the 2007 and 2008
82 interims.