

065006820

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 93
AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Rules
on February 3, 2006)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Stolle)

Directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study staffing standards for sheriffs' departments. Report.

WHEREAS, Virginia's sheriffs' offices are responsible for operating jails, securing the courthouses, and serving process; and

WHEREAS, inadequate staffing of these functions has serious implications for local governments and the Commonwealth relative to the safety and security of citizens, sheriffs, their staff, and inmates in local correctional facilities and the efficient operation of the judicial system; and

WHEREAS, sheriffs and regional jail administrators are often responsible for inmates needing mental health and substance abuse services; and

WHEREAS, the current process for funding sheriffs' departments is a traditional budgeting and reimbursement process that has undergone little revision in the past 50 years; and

WHEREAS, although the Compensation Board uses the staffing standards set forth in the budget in addition to requests from local departments, significant discrepancies exist between state-recognized staffing levels and actual workload in many departments; and

WHEREAS, although the 1998 General Assembly provided for an increase in staffing standards for law-enforcement deputies, this improvement benefited only those localities without police departments; and

WHEREAS, staffing standards for sheriffs' deputies involved in jail operations, court security, and process services remain unchanged; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to develop staffing standards for sheriffs' departments that more accurately reflect actual workloads and requirements and to determine the number and funding of additional positions that such revised standards may indicate are necessary; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission be directed to study staffing standards for sheriffs' departments.

In conducting its study, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall consider (i) trends in personnel costs for jails based on annual reports of the Compensation Board and other pertinent data, (ii) formulas based on different jail construction criteria that will enable the Compensation Board to address staffing needs for jails, and (iii) staffing standards that accurately reflect actual workloads and requirements, including mental health and substance abuse counseling.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission by the Compensation Board and the Virginia Sheriffs' Association. 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 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 Legislative Audit and Review 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.