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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 115

Offered January 9, 2008

Prefiled January 8, 2008

Continuing the Joint Subcommittee to Study the Shortage of Science and Engineering Graduates in the Commonwealth. Report.

Patron—Purkey

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, House Joint Resolution No. 611 (2007) established the Joint Subcommittee to Study Science and Technology Education in Business, Law, and Policy Graduate Programs at the Commonwealth's Institutions of Higher Education; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Subcommittee met three times during the 2007 interim, hearing from educational institutions, private industry representatives, and the public sector on the dearth of qualified science and engineering graduates; and

WHEREAS, House Joint Resolution No. 25 (2006) established the Joint Subcommittee to Study Science, Math and Technology, which also met and discussed similar issues during the 2007 interim; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Subcommittee saw that many of its original objectives were being met by the Joint Subcommittee to Study Science, Math and Technology, but there was also a great need to examine the lack of science and engineering graduates in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, a recent editorial in the Wall Street Journal commented on the need for U.S. businesses to hire foreign engineers, often paying significant work visa fees and taxes in addition to their salaries, because of a lack of American born qualified candidates; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has a tradition of leadership in information technology, nanotechnology, modeling and simulation, biotechnology, and other innovative science and technology fields; and

WHEREAS, innovative financing and legal arrangements are necessary to operate any successful entrepreneurial venture, especially in the area of science and technology; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Subcommittee to Study Shortage of Science and Engineering Graduates in the Commonwealth be continued. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of 15 members that shall consist of five members of the House of Delegates 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; three members of the Senate to appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; one nonlegislative citizen member who shall be a representative of the science or engineering community and one nonlegislative citizen member who shall be a professor of science, math, engineering, or technology at a state institution of higher education to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one nonlegislative citizen member who shall be a representative of the private science or engineering community and one nonlegislative citizen member who shall be a professor of science, engineering, or technology at a state institution of higher education to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. The Secretary of Finance, the Executive Director of the State Council of Higher Education, and the President of the Center for Innovative Technology, or their designees, shall serve ex officio with voting privileges. Nonlegislative citizen members of the joint subcommittee shall be citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The current members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates shall be subject to reappointment. The current members appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules shall continue to serve until replaced. 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 (i) look for immediate solutions to the engineering shortage in the Commonwealth, using the collaboration between Virginia Tech and the Virginia Community College System in the Lynchburg area as a model; (ii) examine ways to encourage partnerships between the science and engineering programs at the Commonwealth's institutions of higher education and science- and technology-based businesses in the Commonwealth, including tax incentives;

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59 (iii) identify other incentives to draw more students into science and engineering programs.

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

64 The joint subcommittee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2008 interim, and the direct costs of
65 this study shall not exceed \$9,600 without approval as set out in this resolution. Approval for
66 unbudgeted nonmember-related expenses shall require the written authorization of the chairman of the
67 joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk. If a companion joint resolution of the other chamber is
68 agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall be required.

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

73 The joint subcommittee shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2008, and the chairman shall
74 submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and
75 recommendations no later than the first day of the 2009 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The
76 executive summary shall state whether the joint subcommittee intends to submit to the General
77 Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or
78 Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of
79 the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports
80 and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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