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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 164

Offered January 9, 2008

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Requesting the Virginia Commission on Immigration to study the pervasiveness of licensed contractors in Virginia hiring undocumented workers or otherwise violating the federal Immigration and Reform Act and the impact of such activities on Virginia's workforce and economy. Report.

Patron—Cosgrove

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Virginia Commission on Immigration (the Commission) is to study, report, and make recommendations to address the costs and benefits of immigration on the Commonwealth, including the impact of immigration on education, health care, law enforcement, local demands for services, and the economy, and the effect on the Commonwealth of federal immigration and funding policies; and

WHEREAS, the Commission may make recommendations and coordinate the proposals of all commissions and agencies related to this purpose; and

WHEREAS, the construction industry reputedly hires large numbers of undocumented workers, who are not authorized under state or federal law to work in United States; and

WHEREAS, the extent of this problem and its impact on Virginia's legal workforce and Virginia's economy is yet unknown; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia Commission on Immigration be requested to study the pervasiveness of licensed contractors in Virginia hiring undocumented workers or otherwise violating the federal Immigration and Reform Act and the impact of such activities on Virginia's workforce and economy. The Commission shall examine whether compliance with state and federal law relating to undocumented workers may be enhanced through heightened licensing requirements administered by the Virginia Board for Contractors.

In conducting its study, the Commission shall also examine whether instituting heightened licensing requirements would impact the approximate 3.5 million backlog of persons who have applied for naturalization or other immigration status or are trying to enter and work in the United States legally. The Commission shall also study the impact of heightened licensing requirements on the licensing process.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Commission by the Board of Professional and Occupational Regulation and the Virginia Board for Contractors. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission for this study, upon request.

The Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2008, and shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and 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 no later than the first day of the 2009 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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