

088836748

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 247**

Offered January 18, 2008

*Recognizing the importance of international education in higher education in Virginia.*

Patrons—Tata, Alexander, Bouchard, Cosgrove, Gear, Hamilton, Howell, A.T., Iaquinto, Joannou, Jones, S.C., Lewis, Mathieson, Melvin, Miller, P.J., Oder, Pogge, Purkey, Spruill, Suit and Tyler

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the world has become increasingly interconnected through technological advancements in communication and transportation, and successful businesses, institutions of higher education, and governments must develop and maintain a global perspective to compete; and

WHEREAS, this global village involves regular interactions among people from diverse social, religious, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, and fostering world peace, preserving and protecting the global environment, developing knowledgeable citizens, and remaining economically competitive require an understanding and awareness of other societies and cultures; and

WHEREAS, the national security and economic interests depend significantly on the ability of institutions of higher education to provide highly educated American and foreign leaders now and in the future; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth contributes significantly to the support and assistance of the nation's military commands, which require international training and experience; and

WHEREAS, foreign trade has become a major component of Virginia's economy as evidenced by the creation of the Accessing International Markets (AIM) export development program, the Virginia Leaders in Export Trade (VALET) program, and state international investment offices in Belgium, Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong; and

WHEREAS, more than 700 foreign-affiliated firms conduct business in Virginia, over 4,000 Virginia manufacturing companies export over \$11.6 billion annually, and over 1,200 Virginia service companies export an estimated \$6.5 billion annually; and

WHEREAS, international education is critical to preparing Virginia students and citizens to excel in a global economy, and the exchange of scholars and students creates a diverse learning environment and builds a foundation for future success in international endeavors; and

WHEREAS, foreign students and their dependents contributed approximately \$14.5 billion to the U.S. economy during the 2006-2007 academic year, and over 12,000 foreign students and their dependents contributed over \$275 million to the Virginia economy during the same period; and

WHEREAS, although international education is important to ensuring that students and future leaders are adequately prepared to meet the challenges of a global society, less than two percent of students enrolled in Virginia colleges and universities participated in study-abroad programs in the 2005-2006 academic year; and

WHEREAS, support of international education in higher education in Virginia would contribute greatly to global awareness among public officials, business leaders, educators, and the people of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's institutions of higher education should be encouraged to (i) develop and enhance courses to increase students' understanding of cultural differences and global concerns, (ii) strengthen efforts to promote increased foreign language proficiency to help prepare students for success in global careers and to provide a foundation for cultural understanding, (iii) facilitate the presence on campus of foreign students and scholars to expose students and the institution's constituents to diverse viewpoints and perspectives, (iv) promote scholarly exchanges and collaborative research with educational partners in other countries, (v) increase participation in study-abroad programs by local students in all disciplines, with a particular focus on underrepresented students, (vi) support programs and activities that provide opportunities for domestic and international students to interact in meaningful exchanges, and (vii) develop innovative and timely public educational forums to explore and introduce global issues and concerns; and

WHEREAS, facilitating the aforementioned goals and the success of international education at institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth requires the enactment of efficacious public policy and adequate financial support by the General Assembly; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the importance of international education in higher education in Virginia be recognized; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the Secretary of Education and to the Executive Director of the State Council of Higher Education,

INTRODUCED

HJ247

**58** requesting that the Executive Director further disseminate copies of this resolution to the members of the  
**59** Council's General Professional Advisory Committee so that they may be apprised of the sense of the  
**60** General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.