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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 248

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Rules
on March 3, 2008)
(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Sickles)

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study and advance the development and enhancement of the biosciences and biotechnology in the Commonwealth. Report.

WHEREAS, the biosciences, broadly defined, are producing advances in human knowledge beyond even our most recent optimistic predictions; and

WHEREAS, neighboring states to the Commonwealth as well as states around the country are investing in bioscientific research and have developed strategic plans for, among other things, higher education-based research, public-private partnerships, and venture capital incentives; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Commission on Biotechnology has laid the groundwork for a better understanding of the role of these disciplines in the social and economic welfare of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, future investment in the biosciences and biotechnologies promises to yield improvements in the quality of life for Virginians as well as fellow citizens throughout the nation and the world; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study and advance the development and enhancement of the biosciences and biotechnology in the Commonwealth. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of 13 members that shall consist of eight legislative members, four nonlegislative citizen members, and one ex officio member. Members shall be appointed as follows: five 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; three members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; two nonlegislative citizen members, of whom one shall represent Virginia's public research institutions of higher education, and one shall have expertise in local economic development, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates; and two nonlegislative citizen members, of whom one shall represent the Center for Innovative Technology, and one shall represent the private biotechnology industry, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. The Secretary of Technology or his designee shall serve ex officio with voting privileges. Nonlegislative citizen members of the joint subcommittee shall be citizens of the Commonwealth. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk, nonlegislative citizen members shall be reimbursed only for travel originating and ending within the Commonwealth 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.

During the course of its study, the joint subcommittee shall also ensure the participation and contribution of representatives of agricultural and tobacco interests, federal laboratories in Virginia involved in research and technology transfer in life sciences, and the not-for-profit life science and research institutions and laboratories in the Commonwealth. However, these representatives shall not provide staffing services to the joint subcommittee or have voting privileges.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall (i) review and implement appropriate and efficacious recommendations of state and national research investigations in the disciplines of bioscience and biotechnology, including the Governor's Commission on Biotechnology; (ii) examine, continue, and enlarge the work begun by the Governor's Commission on Biotechnology, including, but not limited to, determining how Virginia's research universities, federal and state laboratories, biotechnology incubators, research parks, private industry, and other major resources can be leveraged to help make Virginia a more attractive location for the development and enhancement of the biosciences and biotechnology industry; (iii) determine how these resources may increase the development of the biotechnology industry through technology transfer and commercialization of new ideas and discoveries; (iv) assess how strategic initiatives in bioscience and biotechnology may generate economic development and investment in Virginia, particularly in rural and urban regions of the Commonwealth; (v) examine Virginia's workforce development status, including education, supply, and training needs relative to supporting viable bioscience research and biotechnology industry in the Commonwealth; (vi) evaluate the capacity of bioscience and biotechnology to protect and preserve Virginia's natural resources; (vii) investigate innovative directions in bioscience, including informational, technological, infrastructure, funding, and long-term research goals, and regulatory needs in areas such as biomedical research;

genetic engineering; disease, growth and metabolism, and development and reproduction in livestock, fish and food animals; agricultural biotechnology; and plant diseases and insect pests; (viii) define and recommend the optimal climate that is conducive to basic bioscientific and biotechnological research in Virginia; (ix) identify the type of bioscience and biotechnology industries that the Commonwealth is positioned to attract, recruit, and support due to the state's workforce, location, and other advantages; (x) consider the work and recommendations of the Governor's Commission on Biotechnology, together with other bodies of research on the application of the biosciences and enhancement of the biotechnology industry; and (xi) develop and recommend a strategic and visionary plan that implements certain of the recommendations deemed feasible and appropriate, establishes Virginia as a national and global leader in bioscience and biotechnology research and application by 2018, and enables the Commonwealth to maintain its national and global leadership thereafter.

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

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

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

The joint subcommittee shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2008, 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 2009 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the joint subcommittee 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 the 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.

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