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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 44

Offered January 9, 2008

Prefiled December 21, 2007

Requesting the Office of Comprehensive Services to develop a comprehensive information system that would replace or revise the Service Fee Directory. Report.

Patron—Toscano

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the General Assembly approved HJR 60 (2006), which directed the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to evaluate the quality and cost of children's residential services delivered through the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA); and

WHEREAS, the study placed great emphasis on understanding whether the high cost of residential services is justifiable given the scope and quality of the services received; and

WHEREAS, while the report noted that residential providers' financial statements suggest that the majority of facilities are charging rates commensurate with the scope of services provided, it also found that local CSA staff have no reliable source of information to compare the costs of similar children's services against individual program characteristics, effectiveness, and compliance records; and

WHEREAS, local CSA decision makers need accurate and comprehensive information about the quality, nature, and cost of available children's services; and

WHEREAS, without this information, CSA programs may pay too much for a service because they are unable to determine whether service rates are reasonable relative to the scope or quality of what they are purchasing; and

WHEREAS, many localities have reported significant increases in the costs of residential services in recent years; and

WHEREAS, expenditures on residential services comprise the majority of CSA spending, and it is more than four times as expensive to serve a child in a residential environment as it is in the community; and

WHEREAS, the report issued by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission notes that the state-maintained database on the services offered and rates charged by residential facilities, called the Service Fee Directory, is believed to be inaccurate, unreliable, and not user-friendly, and the state collects no information on the effectiveness of individual residential facilities in shaping positive child outcomes; and

WHEREAS, improving consumer access to more comprehensive and accurate information on the cost, quality, and effectiveness of children's residential programs could enhance market efficiency and better control rates; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Office of Comprehensive Services be requested to develop a comprehensive information system that would replace or revise the Service Fee Directory to capture and track, on an ongoing basis, key compliance, performance, and financial information, including rates, about residential services.

The Office of Comprehensive Services shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary and report of its progress in meeting the request of this resolution no later than the first day of the 2009 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary and report shall be submitted for publication as a report document 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.

INTRODUCED

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