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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 55

Offered January 9, 2008

Prefiled January 8, 2008

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study the teacher shortage in the Commonwealth. Report.

Patron—Locke

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, a nonprofit group that seeks to increase the retention of quality teachers, estimated from a survey of several districts that teacher turnover was costing the nation's districts some \$7 billion annually for recruiting, hiring, and training; and

WHEREAS, demographers agree that education is one of the fields hardest hit by the departure of hundreds of thousands of baby boomers from the work force, particularly because a slowdown in hiring in the 1980s and 1990s raised the average age of the teaching profession; and

WHEREAS, the confluence of such retirements with the departure of disillusioned young teachers is exacerbating the shortage; and

WHEREAS, higher salaries in the business world and more opportunities for women are drawing away from the field recruits who might in another era have proved to be talented teachers with strong academic backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future has calculated that nearly a third of all new teachers leave the profession after just three years, and that after five years almost half are gone; and

WHEREAS, according to the most recent U.S. Department of Education statistics, approximately 269,000 of the nation's 3.2 million public school teachers, or 8.4 percent, quit the field in the 2003-2004 school year; 30 percent of them retired, and 56 percent said they left to pursue another career because they were dissatisfied; and

WHEREAS, the federal No Child Left Behind law requires schools and districts to put a qualified teacher in every classroom; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, Virginia's teacher preparation institutions, both public and private, prepared only 3,066 teachers for Virginia's classrooms; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Education has identified the following critical teacher shortage areas: Special Education, Mathematics, Career and Technical Education, Elementary Education, Foreign Language, Middle School, Reading Specialist, Earth Science, History and Social Sciences, and English; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study the teacher shortage in the Commonwealth. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of 15 members that shall consist of 10 legislative members, four nonlegislative citizen members, and one ex officio member. Members shall be appointed as follows: four members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; six 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; four nonlegislative citizen members, one of whom shall be a local school board representative, and one of whom shall be a former teacher, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; and two nonlegislative citizen members, one of whom shall be an employee of the Department of Education, and one of whom shall be a current teacher, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates upon the recommendation of the Governor, if any. The Superintendent of Public Instruction or his designee shall serve ex officio with voting privileges. Nonlegislative citizen members of the joint subcommittee shall be citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. 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 review current teacher certification and licensure requirements, as well as teacher preparation programs in Virginia; examine the effectiveness of existing programs designed to recruit and retain teachers, including Teach for America, and other alternative certification routes; identify barriers to teaching as a career choice and possible solutions; evaluate other

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59 states' initiatives aimed at teacher recruitment and retention; and identify incentives for bringing
60 out-of-state teachers to Virginia.

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

66 The joint subcommittee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2008 interim and four meetings for
67 the 2009 interim, and the direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$10,800 for each year without
68 approval as set out in this resolution. Approval for unbudgeted nonmember-related expenses shall require
69 the written authorization of the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk. If a
70 companion joint resolution of the other chamber is agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall
71 be required.

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

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

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