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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 76

Offered January 9, 2008

Prefiled January 9, 2008

Continuing the Joint Subcommittee to Study Long-Term Funding Sources for the Purchase of Development Rights to Preserve Open-Space Land and Farmlands. Report.

Patron—Hanger

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, House Joint Resolution No. 133 (2006) and Senate Joint Resolution No. 94 (2006) established the Joint Subcommittee to Study Long-Term Funding Sources for the Purchase of Development Rights to Preserve Open-Space Land and Farmlands; and

WHEREAS, House Joint Resolution No. 692 (2007) and Senate Joint Resolution No. 401 (2007) continued the study for a second year; and

WHEREAS, in November 2007 the joint subcommittee was apprised that an additional 359,931 acres were needed to be preserved to meet a goal of preserving twenty percent of the Commonwealth's portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed by 2010, which goal was agreed to by the Commonwealth under the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative that the Commonwealth meet its goals under the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the joint subcommittee learned that the deficiency in parks and recreational facilities in Northern Virginia is greater than in any other region of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of preserving open space lands and establishing new state and regional parks include cleaner air and water, recreation opportunities for citizens, preservation of working farms, protection of threatened species, and economic benefits of related businesses such as farming, the timber industry, and the fishing industry, as well as the economic benefits of increased tourism; and

WHEREAS, a cost-sharing arrangement between the Commonwealth and its local governments needs to be developed in order to meaningfully preserve Virginia's agricultural and open-space lands and to establish new parks; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Subcommittee to Study Long-Term Funding Sources for the Purchase of Development Rights to Preserve Open-Space Land and Farmlands be continued. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of nine members that shall consist of three members of the Senate appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules and six members of the House of Delegates 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. The current members appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules shall continue to serve until replaced. The current members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates shall be subject to reappointment. Vacancies shall be filled by the original appointing authority. The joint subcommittee shall elect a chairman and vice chairman from among its membership.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall study alternative options for cost-sharing arrangements with local governments to provide funding for land preservation and new parks, the effectiveness and efficiency of local purchase of development rights programs as a tool for land preservation, the future needs of the Commonwealth for open-space land and parks, sources of dedicated funds for long-term funding of land preservation and new parks, and such other matters relating to land preservation that the joint subcommittee deems appropriate for study.

Administrative staff support shall be provided by the Office of the Clerk of the Senate. Legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by the joint subcommittee shall be provided by the Division of Legislative Services. 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 \$9,000 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 Senate members or a majority of the House 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.

INTRODUCED

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59 The joint subcommittee shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2008, and the chairman shall
60 submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and
61 recommendations no later than the first day of the 2009 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The
62 executive summary shall state whether the joint subcommittee intends to submit to the General
63 Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or
64 Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of
65 the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports
66 and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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