

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 132

Requesting the Secretary of Health and Human Resources to establish a mechanism to facilitate improved coordination and access to services to senior citizens in Virginia. Report.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 15, 2010

Agreed to by the Senate, March 2, 2010

WHEREAS, in August 2009, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention released new life expectancy tables that indicated the average 65-year-old senior citizen can expect to live to almost 84, and that newborns in America can expect to live to about 78 due in part to the declining death rate; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2007 there were 37.9 million people age 65 or older in the United States, and the projected population of people age 65 or older in 2050 will grow to approximately 88.5 million; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department for the Aging indicates that "the population of Virginians age 60 and over will grow from 14.7 percent of the total population in 1990 to almost 25 percent by 2025 when there will be more than 2 million Virginians in this age group"; and

WHEREAS, the Department indicates further that the "number of Virginians age 85 and older will increase five times faster than the state's total population by 2025, and that Virginia's older population is growing more racially and ethnically diverse, reflecting the growing racial and cultural diversity of the Commonwealth and the nation"; and

WHEREAS, such tremendous growth in this age group will contribute to the increasing demand for services to the aged; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's health and social services agencies deliver vital and essential services to senior citizens, but services are not always conveniently located or accessible; and although information about services is available online, many senior citizens do not own computers or have access to them or are not technologically proficient; and

WHEREAS, efforts in other states to coordinate information and access to health, social, educational, financial, housing, employment opportunities, reporting of abuse, and other services for senior citizens to provide one-stop shopping for information have been extremely successful, effective, and cost efficient, making the lives of senior citizens easier by assisting them in as many areas as possible; and

WHEREAS, in many states, one-stop shopping is a model of coordinated services among several state and local agencies and community organizations, and coordinated services promote collaboration, communication, seamless delivery of services, and networking of the multitude of federal, state, and local services and entitlements to seniors; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department for the Aging has presented to the Governor and the General Assembly a four-year plan that addresses efforts for collaboration and coordination of services for older adults, persons with disabilities, and caregivers; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department for the Aging, with the active and ongoing involvement and support of the Commonwealth's 25 area agencies through the No Wrong Door service coordination program, the Aging and Disability Resource Center, and initiatives of the Older American Act, provides comprehensive services and conveys information to persons in need by telephone and Internet at community locations; and

WHEREAS, coordinated services will enable many senior citizens to remain independent and live more securely in their own homes while maintaining their quality of life; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Secretary of Health and Human Resources be requested to establish a mechanism to facilitate improved coordination and access to services to senior citizens in Virginia.

The Secretary of Health and Human Resources shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary and report of his progress in meeting the request of this resolution no later than the first day of the 2011 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.

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