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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 80

Offered January 13, 2010

Prefiled January 12, 2010

*Requesting the Department of Health Professions to study the advisability of permitting the use of medication aides in nursing homes. Report.*

Patron—Barker

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Virginia enacted laws in 2005 to create a medication aide registry and regulate the use of medication aides in assisted living facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Code of Virginia permits unlicensed staff who have satisfactorily completed a training program to administer medications to persons receiving services in various programs or facilities licensed by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services and the Department of Social Services; and

WHEREAS, at least 20 states have approved the use of trained medication aides under the supervision of professional licensed nurses in their nursing homes; and

WHEREAS, nursing homes in states permitting the use of medication aides have determined that the addition of trained medication aides allows the licensed nursing staff to devote more time to professional nursing assessment and the delivery of direct nursing care to residents; and

WHEREAS, many nursing facilities are changing the delivery of care by using "culture change" options, including the use of care teams in resident care; and

WHEREAS, the use of medication aides on care teams would enhance resident care under appropriate supervision; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Department of Health Professions be requested to study the advisability of permitting the use of medication aides in nursing homes.

In conducting its study, the Department shall (i) research the prevalence of medication aides in nursing homes in other states, (ii) examine the potential for such additional level of staff in nursing homes to enhance team care and extend licensed nursing care for residents, (iii) consider the regulatory protections and safeguards needed if medication aides were permitted to administer certain medications in nursing homes in the Commonwealth, and (iv) consult with nursing home, pharmacy, and nursing professionals in each aspect of the study.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Department by the Department of Health. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department for this study, upon request.

The Department shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2010, and shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports no later than the first day of the 2011 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

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