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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 617

Offered January 12, 2011

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Establishing a joint committee of the House Committee on Finance and the Senate Committee on Finance to study the method of selecting the Auditor of Public Accounts. Report.

Patrons—Cox, J.A. and Athey

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Article IV, Section 18, of the Constitution of Virginia provides that the "Auditor of Public Accounts shall be elected by the joint vote of the two houses of the General Assembly for the term of four years"; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of the Auditor as a legislative branch official elected by the General Assembly was the result of a study by an audit committee task force in 1927; and

WHEREAS, a number of states elect the auditor, among them Massachusetts, Montana, New Mexico, Ohio, and Washington; and

WHEREAS, it is timely to examine the most appropriate means of selecting the Auditor of Public Accounts and assuring his competence and independence; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint committee of the House Committee on Finance and the Senate Committee on Finance be established to study the method of selecting the Auditor of Public Accounts. The joint committee shall have a total membership of five members, consisting of three members of the House Committee on Finance to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates upon the recommendation of the Chairman of the House Committee on Finance and two members of the Senate Committee on Finance to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules upon the recommendation of the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance. The joint committee shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among its membership.

In conducting its study, the joint committee shall review the operations of the office of the Auditor of Public Accounts and his counterparts in other states, study the methods used throughout the country to select auditors, and determine which method of selection will most benefit the Commonwealth.

Administrative staff support shall be provided by the Office of the Clerk of the House of Delegates. Legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by the joint committee shall be provided by the Division of Legislative Services. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint committee for this study, upon request.

The joint committee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2011 interim. Approval for unbudgeted nonmember-related expenses shall require the written authorization of the chairman of the joint committee 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 committee shall be adopted if a majority of the House members or a majority of the Senate members of the joint committee (i) vote against the recommendation and (ii) vote for the recommendation to fail notwithstanding the majority vote of the joint committee.

The joint committee shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2011, and the chairman shall submit an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2012 Regular Session of the General Assembly to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems. The executive summary shall state whether the joint committee intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and the report shall be submitted 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.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may approve or disapprove expenditures for this study, extend or delay the period for the conduct of the study, or authorize additional meetings during the 2011 interim.

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