

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 108

Directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study the cost efficiency of the Commonwealth's institutions of higher education and to identify opportunities to reduce the cost of public higher education in Virginia. Report.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 10, 2012
 Agreed to by the Senate, February 28, 2012

WHEREAS, "Preparing for the Top Jobs of the 21st Century: The Virginia Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2011" has set a goal of awarding 100,000 more degrees over the next 15 years; and

WHEREAS, the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia has reported that the average increase for in-state undergraduate tuition and mandatory fees from the 2009-2010 school year to the 2010-2011 school year was 13.1 percent at four-year institutions; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission has reported in its 2011 *Review of State Spending* that tuition revenue for Virginia's public colleges and universities increased 110 percent between 2002 and 2009, while inflation increased only 23 percent during that period; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission has reported that Virginia's average annual in-state tuition and fees at public four-year institutions of higher education was \$8,814 in 2010, ranking as the fourteenth highest average in the nation; and

WHEREAS, the increasing costs of higher education have forced many students to incur significant debt in order to complete their degrees, with the Institute for College Access and Success reporting that the average student debt for Virginia public institutions of higher education is \$19,918, and that 57 percent of students have debt related to their higher education; and

WHEREAS, the increasing costs of higher education and the growing debt burden for students may limit access to educational opportunities, adversely affect growth in other sectors of Virginia's economy, and be an obstacle to the goal to award 100,000 more degrees over the next 15 years; and

WHEREAS, in December 2009 the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission authorized its staff to complete a study of the cost efficiency of higher education in Virginia, but, because of workload demands from joint study resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, such a study could not be completed; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission be directed to study the cost efficiency of the Commonwealth's institutions of higher education and to identify opportunities to reduce the cost of public higher education in Virginia.

In conducting its study, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) shall consider (i) teaching loads and productivity of faculty; (ii) the impact of faculty research on tuition and other costs; (iii) incentives created by existing faculty compensation models; (iv) design and utilization of facilities; (v) operation of enterprise activities; (vi) the use of technology for academic programs and administrative functions; (vii) administrative staffing and costs; (viii) scholarships and other student aid programs; (ix) the use of outsourcing and public-private partnerships; (x) the use of cooperative procurement; (xi) the impact of nonacademic activities and programs on tuition and fees; (xii) sources of revenue and income, and how these sources are allocated toward academic, administrative, and other costs; (xiii) opportunities to reduce the cost of public higher education in Virginia; and (xiv) such other related matters as it may deem appropriate.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission by the State Council for Higher Education for Virginia and all state-supported institutions of higher education. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to JLARC for this study, upon request.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall complete its meetings for the first year by November 30, 2013, and for the second year by November 30, 2014, and the Chairman shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the next Regular Session of the General Assembly for each year. Each executive summary shall state whether JLARC 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 summaries and reports 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.

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