

## 2012 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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### HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 112

Offered January 11, 2012

Prefiled January 11, 2012

*Recognizing the inestimable value of early childhood education to children and to the Commonwealth.*

Patrons—Kory and Surovell; Senator: Favola

Referred to Committee on Appropriations

WHEREAS, quality early childhood education programs benefit all children, but particularly those from economically disadvantaged homes, and provide a sound basis for learning and build knowledge, personal competence, confidence, and a sense of social responsibility; and

WHEREAS, multiple studies have shown that early childhood education produces not only improved subsequent performance in school but improved life skills leading to better jobs and more satisfying lives; and

WHEREAS, ensuring access to quality preschool for three-year-olds and four-year-olds has proven to be one of the soundest educational investments the public can make, providing demonstrated, significant, long-term reductions in the costs of special education, grade retention, welfare, and crime; and

WHEREAS, during their K through 12 years and beyond, children who attend quality preschool perform better on standardized achievement tests in reading and math; exhibit more positive behaviors in the classroom; and are more likely to graduate from high school, continue their education, and be more prosperous as adults; and

WHEREAS, quality preschool programs should be funded adequately in order to assure adherence to established standards of quality and to attract and keep educated professionals; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth in 2012 expects to allocate \$65.1 million for the Virginia Preschool Initiative to expand childhood education opportunities for children not served by the federal Head Start program, which itself provides \$102 million in support for early childhood education; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Preschool Initiative and Head Start each serve approximately 17,000 children in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, this is only 20 percent of the children in Virginia who could benefit from preschool education; and

WHEREAS, during 2011, the Commonwealth chose not to pursue a share of \$500 million of federal funds available through the "Race to the Top" grant competition; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Commonwealth recognize the inestimable value of early childhood education to children and to the Commonwealth and set a goal of extending the availability of early childhood education so that the Virginia Preschool Initiative and Head Start together reach 50,000 children in the Commonwealth by 2017; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the Governor that he may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.

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