

2013 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 762

Requesting local health departments to provide to the State Health Commissioner a detailed report on efforts to promote breast cancer awareness and prevention. Report.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 4, 2013

Agreed to by the Senate, February 19, 2013

WHEREAS, breast cancer, a disease in which malignant cells form in the tissues of the breasts, afflicts women in the United States more than any other type of cancer except skin cancer and is second only to lung cancer as a cause of cancer death in women, according to the National Breast Cancer Foundation; and

WHEREAS, the National Breast Cancer Foundation reports that annually nearly 200,000 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer and more than 40,000 women will die of the disease and that approximately 1,700 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer and 450 men will die of the disease each year; and

WHEREAS, breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among African American women and "African Americans have the highest death rate and shortest survival of any racial and ethnic group in the United States for most cancers," as reported by the American Cancer Society; and

WHEREAS, for the past two decades, many women have heeded the recommended annual mammogram screening beginning at age 40, and early detection of breast cancer is key to successful treatment and survival; and

WHEREAS, mammograms have been instrumental in the early detection of breast cancer, saving thousands of lives; and

WHEREAS, recently, new government guidelines by the United States Preventive Services Task Force of the United States Department of Health and Human Services recommend fewer screenings, that most women should begin annual mammogram screening at age 50 rather than age 40, that women age 50 to 74 should have mammograms every two years rather than every year, and that doctors should stop teaching women to self-examine on a regular basis; and

WHEREAS, although the new guidelines have called into question the efficacy and benefit of mammography, early detection remains the most effective tool to prevent breast cancer and increase survival rates, particularly among minority and other women who have less access to quality health care; and

WHEREAS, implementation of a breast cancer awareness and prevention protocol by local health departments would help increase the early detection of breast cancer and successful treatment outcomes; and

WHEREAS, this important health care issue should be addressed to protect the health and well-being of thousands of women and men in the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That local health departments be requested to provide to the State Health Commissioner a detailed report on efforts to promote breast cancer awareness and prevention.

The State Health Commissioner shall provide a copy of the compiled report from local health departments to the Cancer Action Coalition of Virginia and the Commissioner shall also submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary and report of the progress of local health departments in meeting the request of this resolution no later than the first day of the 2014 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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