

14101918D

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 41

Offered January 8, 2014

Prefiled December 31, 2013

Establishing a joint committee of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health to study options for reducing the number of Standards of Learning assessments. Report.

Patrons—Landes, Bell, Richard P., Greason, Kory, LaRock and Peace

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, elementary and secondary school students in the Commonwealth are required to take 34 criterion-referenced assessments associated with the Standards of Learning (SOL) in grades three through 11; and

WHEREAS, school accountability is an important goal of the public school system in the Commonwealth, but it must be balanced with meaningful, individualized student learning and student growth; and

WHEREAS, excessive testing and test preparation may inhibit the ability of teachers to cultivate an environment in which students are encouraged to think critically and develop a deep and nuanced understanding of the SOL subjects and course content; and

WHEREAS, the prosperity of the Commonwealth is linked to the ability of its public schools to train college- and career-ready high school graduates with critical thinking skills; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint committee of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health be established to study options for reducing the number of Standards of Learning assessments. The joint committee shall have a total membership of six members, consisting of four members of the House Committee on Education to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates upon the recommendation of the Chairman of the House Committee on Education and two members of the Senate Committee on Education and Health to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules upon the recommendation of the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education and Health. The joint committee shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among its membership.

In conducting its study, the joint committee shall gather information and develop recommendations on:

1. The feasibility of reducing the number of SOL assessments administered to public school students in grades three through 11;

2. Which SOL assessments to eliminate and which SOL assessments to continue administering; and

3. How best to use the remaining SOL assessments and the extra instructional time resulting from a reduction in the number of assessments administered to foster individualized student learning and measure student growth.

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. Technical assistance shall be provided by the Department of Education, the Secretary of Education, and the local school boards. 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 2014 interim. An estimated \$11,280 is allocated for speakers, materials, and other resources. 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, 2014, and the chairman shall submit an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2015 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

INTRODUCED

HJ41

59 and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

60 Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint
61 Rules Committee. The Committee may approve or disapprove expenditures for this study, extend or
62 delay the period for the conduct of the study, or authorize additional meetings during the 2014 interim.