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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 583

Offered January 14, 2015

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Establishing a joint subcommittee to study creation of a model local government charter. Report.

Patron—Surovell

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, all Virginia cities and towns and several Virginia counties operate under charters approved by the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, a number of existing charters were initially adopted over 100 years ago and contain many outdated provisions; and

WHEREAS, local government charters can only be updated with approval of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, many charters are brought before the General Assembly for amendment on a piecemeal basis, making it difficult for General Assembly members to properly evaluate the proposed changes; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study creation of a model local government charter. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of 10 members, who shall consist of six legislative members and four nonlegislative citizen members. Members shall be appointed as follows: four members of the House of Delegates from the Counties, Cities and Towns Committee to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates; two members of the Senate from the Senate Local Government Committee to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; two nonlegislative citizen members with knowledge of local government to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates upon consideration of the recommendation of the Virginia Municipal League, if any; and two nonlegislative citizen members with knowledge of local government to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules upon consideration of the recommendation of the Virginia Municipal League, if any. Nonlegislative citizen members of the joint subcommittee shall be citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk, nonlegislative citizen members shall only be reimbursed for travel originating and ending within the Commonwealth of Virginia for the purpose of attending meetings. If a companion joint resolution of the other chamber is agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall be required. The joint subcommittee shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among its membership, who shall be members of the General Assembly.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall develop a model local government charter, or a series of model charters, that will serve as a guide to local governments in the creation and amendment of their charters and as a guide and point of comparison for members of the General Assembly as they evaluate the many county, city, and town charter bills that are introduced each session.

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 subcommittee shall be provided by the Division of Legislative Services. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint subcommittee for this study, upon request.

The joint subcommittee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2015 interim, and the direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$16,080 without approval as set out in this resolution. Approval for unbudgeted nonmember-related expenses shall require the written authorization of the chairman of the joint subcommittee 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 subcommittee shall be adopted if a majority of the House members or a majority of the Senate members appointed to the joint subcommittee (i) vote against the recommendation and (ii) vote for the recommendation to fail notwithstanding the majority vote of the joint subcommittee.

The joint subcommittee shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2015, 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 2016 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the joint subcommittee intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or

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59 Senate document. The executive summary and the report shall be submitted as provided in the
60 procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents
61 and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

62 Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint
63 Rules Committee. The Committee may approve or disapprove expenditures for this study, extend or
64 delay the period for the conduct of the study, or authorize additional meetings during the 2015 interim.