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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 630

Offered January 14, 2015

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Directing the Health Insurance Reform Commission to study mandating health insurance coverage for abuse deterrent formulations for opioid medications. Report.

Patrons—Byron, Austin, Garrett, Kilgore and O'Bannon; Senators: Carrico, Chafin, McDougale, Newman and Watkins

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, over 100 million adults in the United States suffer from chronic pain, including millions with debilitating conditions like arthritis, fibromyalgia, and lower back pain; and

WHEREAS, chronic pain costs the Commonwealth millions of dollars each year in lost productivity, added health costs, and increased expenditures for Medicaid; and

WHEREAS, the significant and justified concentration on limiting substance abuse in the Commonwealth and the consideration of measures that would impose barriers to pain treatment have placed health care providers and patients in a difficult position; and

WHEREAS, new technologies are available that can protect the integrity of pain medications by preventing their form from being altered in a manner that would facilitate their illegal use by substance abusers; and

WHEREAS, the federal Food and Drug Administration is currently studying the application of abuse deterrent formulation (ADF) technologies for use in opioid medications; and

WHEREAS, the introduction of ADF technologies into the pain medication arena is of great potential significance to the Commonwealth as a method to ensure the continued access of patients to these important medicines and to the general interests of the Commonwealth as a strategy to limit substance and prescription abuse problems; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Health Insurance Reform Commission be directed to study mandating health insurance coverage for abuse deterrent formulations for opioid medications. In conducting its study, the Health Insurance Reform Commission shall examine the issues of access by citizens of the Commonwealth to effective pain management medications and the need to require the adoption of abuse deterrent formulation technologies for pain medicines in order to assist in the Commonwealth's continuing efforts to eliminate substance and prescription drug abuse.

The Office of the Clerk of the House of Delegates shall provide administrative staff support. The Division of Legislative Services shall provide legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by the Health Insurance Reform Commission. Technical assistance shall be provided to the Health Insurance Reform Commission by the State Corporation Commission's Bureau of Insurance. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Health Insurance Reform Commission for this study, upon request.

The Health Insurance Reform Commission 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 Health Insurance Reform Commission 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 report 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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