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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 103**

Offered January 13, 2016

Prefiled January 11, 2016

*Directing the Commission on Youth to study the adoption home study process in the Commonwealth. Report.*

Patrons—Peace and Collins

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, adoption creates a legal relationship, rights, and responsibilities between the adoptive parents and the child being adopted such that the adopted child is, for all intents and purposes, the child of the adoptive parents; and

WHEREAS, adoptions in the Commonwealth may be facilitated by local departments of social services or licensed private child-placing agencies in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Virginia and regulations adopted by the Department of Social Services; and

WHEREAS, a thorough investigation of an adoptive placement, including completion of a home study, visits to the potential adoptive home, and interviews with the potential adoptive parents, is required before a child may be placed with adoptive parents; and

WHEREAS, the process for completion of a home study can be lengthy, and the cost of home studies can be substantial; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Commission on Youth be directed to study the adoption home study process in the Commonwealth.

In conducting its study, the Commission on Youth shall review the current mutual family assessment home study format and curriculum, review the process by which home studies are completed by staff of local departments of social services and licensed private child-placing agencies, and consider the potential benefits of implementation of a uniform home study format established by the Department of Social Services for all home studies completed in the Commonwealth.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Commission on Youth by the Department of Social Services. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission on Youth for this study, upon request.

The Commission on Youth shall complete its meetings for the first year by November 30, 2016, and for the second year by November 30, 2017, 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 next Regular Session of the General Assembly for each year. Each executive summary shall state whether the Commission on Youth 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 summaries and reports 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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