

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 58

Continuing the Joint Subcommittee to Formulate Recommendations for the Development of a Comprehensive and Coordinated Planning Effort to Address Recurrent Flooding as the Joint Subcommittee on Coastal Flooding. Report.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 10, 2016
Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 10, 2016

WHEREAS, House Joint Resolution No. 16 (2014) and Senate Joint Resolution No. 3 (2014) established the Joint Subcommittee to Formulate Recommendations for the Development of a Comprehensive and Coordinated Planning Effort to Address Recurrent Flooding (the Joint Subcommittee); and

WHEREAS, House Joint Resolution No. 50 (2012) and Senate Joint Resolution No. 76 (2012) directed the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) to study strategies for adaptation to prevent recurrent flooding in Tidewater and Eastern Shore Virginia localities; and

WHEREAS, the resulting VIMS report, entitled "Recurrent Flooding Study for Tidewater Virginia," published as Senate Document 3 (2013), stated that recurrent flooding impacts all localities in Virginia's coastal zone and is predicted to become worse over reasonable planning horizons (20 to 50 years); and

WHEREAS, VIMS offered several recommendations, including that the Commonwealth, working with its coastal localities, (i) begin comprehensive and coordinated planning efforts; (ii) initiate identification, collection, and analysis of data needed to support effective planning for response efforts; and (iii) take a lead role in addressing recurrent flooding in Virginia for the following reasons: (a) accessing relevant federal resources for planning and mitigation may be enhanced through state mediation, (b) flooding problems are linked to water bodies and therefore often transcend locality boundaries, and (c) prioritizing flood management actions must be based in part on risk, and therefore the Commonwealth must oversee the necessary studies to determine adaptation strategies as well as implementation of the agreed-upon strategies; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) study mandated by House Joint Resolution No. 132 (2012) and presented on October 15, 2013, entitled "Review of Disaster Preparedness Planning in Virginia," stated: "The state generally has strong disaster response plans, but deficiencies in evacuation and shelter plans may compromise the safety of the Hampton Roads population during a catastrophic disaster"; and

WHEREAS, the JLARC study further noted that if four key assumptions in the state's current evacuation plan do not hold, "timely hurricane evacuations could be compromised," placing citizens at risk after the storm; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Housing Commission studied this issue through its Housing and Environmental Standards Work Group and found that zoning, building codes, and planning issues will all be affected by recurrent flooding; and

WHEREAS, House Joint Resolution No. 16 (2014) and Senate Joint Resolution No. 3 (2014) established the Joint Subcommittee as recommended by the VIMS report; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Subcommittee met four times during the 2014 interim to collect information from federal agencies, state agencies, localities, and stakeholders and to carry out its work; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Subcommittee filed an Executive Summary with the General Assembly prior to the 2015 Session that included five initial recommendations to increase public awareness, improve local and state government agency resiliency coordination, and address floodplain management; and

WHEREAS, recommendations made by the Joint Subcommittee during the 2014 interim resulted in six bills passing the General Assembly during the 2015 Session, all with bipartisan support; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Subcommittee met four times during the 2015 interim to collect information from federal agencies, state agencies, localities, and stakeholders and to carry out its work; and

WHEREAS, recommendations made by the Joint Subcommittee during the 2015 interim resulted in additional recommendations that are both legislative in nature and require additional coordination among federal agencies, state agencies and higher education; and

WHEREAS, the members of the full Joint Subcommittee concurred that the Joint Subcommittee should be continued for two more years in order to keep the Commonwealth on the path of advancing Virginia as the coastal states leader in advancing resiliency strategies and, most importantly, protecting its citizens and business assets; and

WHEREAS, to more accurately reflect its mission, the Joint Subcommittee would be more appropriately named the Joint Subcommittee on Coastal Flooding; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Subcommittee to

Formulate Recommendations for the Development of a Comprehensive and Coordinated Planning Effort to Address Recurrent Flooding be continued as the Joint Subcommittee on Coastal Flooding. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of 10 members that shall consist of four members of the House of Delegates 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; three members of the Senate appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; two nonlegislative citizen members, one of whom shall be a business leader and one of whom shall be a representative of the environmental community, appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates; and one nonlegislative citizen member who is a local official representing Virginia's flood-prone communities appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. Nonlegislative citizen members of the joint subcommittee shall be citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The current members appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates shall be subject to reappointment. The current members appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules shall continue to serve until replaced. Vacancies shall be filled by the original appointing authority. 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 review, the joint subcommittee shall recommend short-term and long-term strategies for minimizing the impact of recurrent flooding and coastal storms.

Administrative staff support shall be provided by the Office of the Clerk of the Senate. Legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by the joint subcommittee shall be provided by the Division of Legislative Services. Technical assistance shall be provided by Virginia college and university faculty with expertise in the subject matter. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint subcommittee for this review, upon request.

The joint subcommittee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2016 interim and four meetings for the 2017 interim, and the direct costs of this subcommittee shall not exceed \$16,760 for each year 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 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 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 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.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may approve or disapprove expenditures for the joint subcommittee's review, extend or delay the period for the conduct of the review, or authorize additional meetings during the 2016 and 2017 interims.