

17100932D

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 242

Offered January 11, 2017

Prefiled December 27, 2016

Directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study the feasibility of providing Virginians the opportunity to attend comprehensive community college without paying tuition or fees. Report.

Patrons—Edwards; Delegate: Kory

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, in an increasingly competitive world economy, Virginia's economic strength depends upon the education and skills of its workers; and

WHEREAS, as many as two-thirds of Virginia's jobs will require a postsecondary degree or credential over the coming decades; and

WHEREAS, the increasing costs of higher education and the growing debt burden for students may limit access to educational opportunities and adversely affect growth in other sectors of Virginia's economy; and

WHEREAS, an opportunity to earn a postsecondary education should be afforded not just to the privileged or the few, and the Virginia Community College System was designed to meet the educational and workforce development needs of all Virginians; and

WHEREAS, providing all Virginians the opportunity to attend a comprehensive community college without paying tuition or fees can help ensure Virginia's economic future; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission be directed to study the feasibility of providing Virginians the opportunity to attend comprehensive community college without paying tuition or fees.

In conducting its study, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) shall consider (i) the costs and funding mechanisms associated with providing all Virginians the opportunity to attend a comprehensive community college without paying tuition or fees, (ii) the economic benefit to the Commonwealth, (iii) similar programs in other states such as Tennessee and Oregon, and (iv) any other related matters it deems relevant.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and the State Board of Community Colleges. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to JLARC for this study, upon request.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall complete its meetings 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 2018 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether JLARC 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.

INTRODUCED

SJ242