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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 281

Offered January 11, 2017

Prefiled January 10, 2017

Requesting the Virginia Economic Development Partnership to study the long-term economic viability of working waterfronts. Report.

Patron—Lewis

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, a working waterfront is an area or structure on, over, or adjacent to navigable waters that provides access to the water and is used for water-dependent commercial, industrial, or government activities, including commercial and recreational fishing, tourism, aquaculture, boat and ship building, repair, and services, seafood processing and sales, transportation, shipping, marine construction, and military services; and

WHEREAS, working waterfronts have a major role in supporting Virginia's economy, providing an estimated 122,000 jobs in six marine industries; and

WHEREAS, working waterfronts add an estimated \$8.5 billion to the gross domestic product of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, working waterfronts serve as a cultural cornerstone of Chesapeake Bay lifestyle; and

WHEREAS, working waterfronts face substantial pressures from competition from residential development, rising sea levels, climate change, changing global economic conditions, and loss of natural habitat that supports local shellfish and finfish population; and

WHEREAS, the extent of threats to working waterfronts and the long-term economic sustainability of working waterfronts and the industries they support are unknown; and

WHEREAS, development and preservation of new and existing working waterfronts is in accordance with the interests of the General Assembly and the citizens of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Virginia Economic Development Partnership be requested to study the long-term economic viability of working waterfronts.

In conducting its study, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) shall (i) analyze the recent historical economic impact of working waterfronts in Virginia and its localities; (ii) analyze the economic sustainability of working waterfront industries in the future economy; (iii) identify and assess the potential economic contribution of alternative industries and uses in historical working waterfront areas; and (iv) project the economic viability of preserving waterfront locations for new and existing water-dependent uses and restoring working waterfront structures.

Technical assistance shall be provided to VEDP by the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Virginia Marine Resources Commission. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to VEDP for this study, upon request.

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2017, and shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and 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 no later than the first day of the 2018 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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