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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 24

Offered January 10, 2018

Prefiled December 29, 2017

Encouraging the Governor to request the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics to develop a standard occupational classification for direct support professionals.

Patron—Hope

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, direct support professionals provide assistance with activities of daily living to adults and children with developmental delays receiving services through the Home and Community-Based Services waiver program, the primary and preferred service system for such individuals in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services has recently undertaken efforts to establish reimbursement rates for services provided by direct support professionals to Home and Community-Based Services waiver recipients; and

WHEREAS, because no uniform definition or description of direct support professional job classification exists, the contractor with which the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services was working was forced to rely on an arbitrary selection of occupational data to try to capture the unique and specific skill set of direct service professionals; and

WHEREAS, reimbursement rate setting based on such inexact information may result in rates that are insufficient to attract qualified direct support professionals; and

WHEREAS, maintaining a highly qualified, effective, and dedicated workforce of direct service professionals is critical to providing services through the Home and Community-Based Services waiver program and fulfilling the goals of the Commonwealth in establishing such waiver program; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics is the principal agency responsible for measuring labor market activity, working conditions, and price changes; charged with collecting, analyzing, and disseminating essential economic information to support public and private decision making, the Bureau maintains the reference data upon which decisions are made by federal, state, and local jurisdictions on issues including wage and payment rates; and

WHEREAS, establishment of a specific occupational classification for direct service professionals by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics would allow for the collection of uniform data and information regarding the skills and abilities of and rates of compensation for direct service professionals and provide high-quality data for states, including the Commonwealth, making decisions regarding reimbursement rates for direct service professionals; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Governor be encouraged to request the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics to develop a standard occupational classification for direct support professionals; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the Governor so that he may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.

INTRODUCED

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