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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 93

Offered January 10, 2018

Prefiled January 9, 2018

Requesting the Department of Environmental Quality to study the planting and preservation of trees as a stormwater best management practice. Report.

Patron—Lopez

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, regulators of stormwater in the Commonwealth apply the Virginia Runoff Reduction Method to determine compliance with Virginia Stormwater Management Program technical criteria; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Runoff Reduction Method does not include tree planting or preservation as a stormwater best management practice (BMP); and

WHEREAS, existing stormwater regulations do not encourage the planting of new trees as a part of the property development process; and

WHEREAS, mature trees in the Commonwealth constitute a vanishing resource whose positive effects on stormwater quality and quantity may be undervalued or unrecognized; and

WHEREAS, a recognition of the stormwater benefits provided to the Commonwealth by the practice of planting and preserving trees would provide an additional tool for stormwater compliance; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Environmental Quality be requested to study the planting and preservation of trees as a stormwater best management practice. The Department of Environmental Quality shall include in its study a recommendation as to whether such a practice shall be deemed a creditable BMP and, if so, how much credit shall be given for its use.

In conducting its study, the Department of Environmental Quality shall convene a workgroup that includes representatives of local Virginia stormwater management program authorities.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Department of Environmental Quality by the Department of Forestry and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department of Environmental Quality for this study, upon request.

The Department of Environmental Quality shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2018, 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 2019 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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