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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 106

Offered January 8, 2020

Prefiled January 8, 2020

Requesting the Department of Health to study the use of alternative onsite sewage systems in the Commonwealth. Report.

Patron—Bloxom (By Request)

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, "alternative onsite sewage system" means a treatment works that is not a conventional onsite sewage system and does not result in a point source discharge; and

WHEREAS, "conventional onsite sewage system" means a treatment works consisting of one or more septic tanks with a gravity, pumped, or siphoned conveyance to a gravity-distributed subsurface drainfield; and

WHEREAS, since the adoption of new regulations regarding alternative onsite sewage systems in 2000, there has been an increase in the installation of alternative onsite sewage systems in the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Health be requested to study the use of alternative onsite sewage systems in the Commonwealth.

In conducting its study, the Department of Health shall (i) determine by county how many alternative onsite sewage systems have been installed in the Commonwealth since 2000, the effect of increased installations of alternative onsite sewage systems, the cost of alternative onsite sewage system installations, and the observed failures of alternative onsite sewage systems; (ii) determine whether alternative onsite sewage systems are more or less protective of public health and shellfish waters than conventional onsite sewage systems; (iii) determine how much total nitrogen and phosphorus in pounds is removed from alternative and conventional onsite sewage systems; (iv) analyze and compare the failure rates and effects of alternative and conventional onsite sewage systems, including the average duration of failures for each type of system; (v) analyze and compare the environmental impacts of alternative and conventional onsite sewage systems; (vi) determine whether the Virginia Department of Health's current enforcement mechanisms for alternative and conventional onsite sewage systems are effective in protecting public health; and (vii) determine whether additional funding mechanisms for system pumping and repairs exist for the purpose of protecting public health.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department of Health for this study, upon request.

The Department of Health shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2020, 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 2021 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the Department of Health 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.

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