

2020 SESSION

INTRODUCED

20109066D

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 439

Offered March 2, 2020

Commending the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office.

Patrons—Convirs-Fowler and Davis; Senators: Cosgrove and DeSteph

WHEREAS, the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office introduced an innovative mental health program in 2019 to help address mental illness in prisons and the impact it has on the community; and

WHEREAS, with the support of state funding and in coordination with the Virginia Beach Department of Human Services, the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office launched the program to divert, screen, assess, and treat individuals with mental illness before, during, and after their incarceration; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that many crimes are manifestations of mental illness, the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office developed a plan to help inmates get the care they need and break the cycle of recidivism; and

WHEREAS, as part of the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office's program, inmates receive a mental illness screening within 48 hours after booking, helping prison officials determine if it is appropriate to advocate for their diversion; furthermore, the program improves standards for monitoring inmates during their incarceration and provides each individual with a comprehensive reentry and discharge plan, ensuring they have access to housing, counseling, and medication upon release; and

WHEREAS, to ease the transition back into the community, the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office conducts a follow-up with the inmate within five days after their release and provides an education and engagement program to help family members understand and proactively address any concerns that may arise; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office's program is tackling one of the biggest challenges confronting law enforcement today, helping individuals access the support they need to become healthy, productive members of their communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend the Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office for the innovative mental health program it implemented in 2019; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Ken Stolle, sheriff of Virginia Beach, as an expression of the General Assembly's appreciation for the department's efforts to protect and serve the community.

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