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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 56

Offered January 8, 2020

Prefiled January 6, 2020

*Directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, in consultation with the Department of Corrections, to study the use of privately operated prisons in the Commonwealth. Report.*

Patrons—Plum, Hope, Jenkins, Rasoul and Samirah; Senators: Boysko, Edwards and Howell

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Virginia currently incarcerates individuals at the Lawrenceville Correctional Center, which is a Department of Corrections facility that has been operated by The Geo Group, Inc., since 2003 and houses up to 1,536 inmates; and

WHEREAS since 2000, the number of people housed in privately operated prisons in the United States has increased 47 percent; and

WHEREAS, privately operated prisons have a significantly lower staffing level than publicly operated prisons; and

WHEREAS, privately operated prisons report a significantly higher rate of assaults on staff and inmates; and

WHEREAS, national studies and studies from other states regarding cost and performance comparisons between privately operated and publicly operated prisons have produced varying and confusing results; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, in consultation with the Department of Corrections, be directed to study the use of privately operated prisons in the Commonwealth.

In conducting its study, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, in consultation with the Department of Corrections, shall (i) compare the costs of housing inmates at privately operated prisons with the costs of housing inmates at publicly operated prisons; (ii) examine the extent of services provided to inmates in both privately operated and publicly operated prisons, including substance abuse, anger management, health, and education services; (iii) compare incidents of violence by inmates against prison staff and other inmates at privately operated prisons with those at publicly operated prisons; (iv) examine the overall effectiveness of the only privately operated prison in the Commonwealth since opening; and (v) develop information about the costs, resources, and process necessary to close the only privately operated prison in the Commonwealth.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission for this study, upon request.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2020, 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 2021 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

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