

## 2021 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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### HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 543

Offered January 13, 2021

Prefiled January 11, 2021

*Requesting the Department of Social Services to study ways to increase participation in national service. Report.*

Patron—Helmer

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, national service includes participation in programs such AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and other similar programs and initiatives, as well as participation in military service; and

WHEREAS, participants in national service programs receive hands-on work experience, valuable networking opportunities, and professional skills training; and

WHEREAS, participants in national service programs are paid and can also receive assistance with education expenses through access to education awards granted by such programs; and

WHEREAS, participants in national service help address both emerging and persistent community needs in areas such as education, health and human needs, public safety, disaster preparedness and response, environmental stewardship, and veterans' assistance; and

WHEREAS, participation in national service provides innumerable benefits to both the participants and the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Social Services be requested to study ways to increase participation in national service.

In conducting its study, the Department of Social Services shall consider (i) promoting participation in national service via advertising of service opportunities through social media and traditional media outlets, (ii) identifying ways to increase funding for service opportunities, (iii) creating a Secretary of Service position within the Governor's Cabinet to advise the Governor and other members of his Cabinet on strategies to integrate national service opportunities into state initiatives and programming, (iv) strengthening hiring preferences in state government for individuals who have completed a year of service in a national service program, (v) offering retirement service credits for individuals who have completed a year of service in a national service program, (vi) providing in-state tuition for those serving in national service programs in the Commonwealth, and (vii) identifying other strategies for increasing participation in national service.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Department of Social Services by the Virginia Office of Volunteerism and Community Service, the Governor's Advisory Board on Service and Volunteerism, the Virginia Board of Workforce Development, the Chief Workforce Development Advisor, and the Department of Military Affairs. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department of Social Services for this study, upon request.

The Department of Social Services shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2021, 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 2022 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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