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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 568

Offered January 13, 2021

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Directing the Virginia State Crime Commission to study methods and solutions to prevent girls who are victims of violence from entering the juvenile justice system. Report.

Patrons—Delaney and Ayala

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, sexual abuse is a primary predictor for girls' involvement in the juvenile justice system; and

WHEREAS, on a national level, the rates of sexual abuse are four times higher for girls involved in the juvenile justice system than for boys involved in the juvenile justice system; and

WHEREAS, girls involved in the juvenile justice system are twice as likely as boys involved in the juvenile justice system to report experiencing five or more forms of abuse and trauma; and

WHEREAS, violence causes trauma and it is crucial to identify opportunities for prevention and intervention when abused girls come into contact with the juvenile justice system and approach such situations with a trauma-informed response rather than criminalization; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia State Crime Commission be directed to study methods and solutions to prevent girls who are victims of violence from entering the juvenile justice system.

In conducting its study, the Virginia State Crime Commission shall collect and disaggregate data on (i) the prevalence of trauma and abuse, including the type of abuse, such as trafficking, among girls impacted by each stage of the juvenile justice process; (ii) girls' involvement with the juvenile justice system due to delinquency offenses; (iii) girls dually involved with the juvenile justice system and the child welfare system; (iv) the impact of school discipline policies and practices on girls' justice system involvement; (v) pregnant or parenting girls involved in the juvenile justice system; (vi) girls' experiences in facilities, including instances of being strip searched by men, placed in isolation, shackled during pregnancy, and subject to abuse by staff; (vii) girls' post-system residential status; and (viii) services, resources, and community-based supports to help girls heal from trauma and reduce risk of justice system involvement. Juvenile justice data shall be disaggregated and cross-tabulated by race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and offense. Child welfare data shall be disaggregated and cross-tabulated by race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and type of abuse, by county. Based on the data, the Virginia State Crime Commission shall develop recommendations for policies to ensure that girls are provided with the services and support needed for healing from violence when such girls come into contact with the juvenile justice system and policies that prevent girls who experience violence from coming into contact with the juvenile justice system.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Virginia State Crime Commission by the Virginia Criminal Sentencing Commission and the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court of Virginia. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Virginia State Crime Commission for this study, upon request.

The Virginia State Crime Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2021, 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 2022 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the Virginia State Crime Commission 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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