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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 490

Offered January 11, 2023

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Requesting the Department of Housing and Community Development to study ways to increase affordable housing options for public servants on publicly owned property. Report.

Patrons—VanValkenburg and Lopez

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the stability of housing for public school teachers and employees, law-enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and other public servants is critical to the overall success and stability of each community in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the steadily increasing cost of housing in certain markets is a growing trend that is driving public servant turnover in many industries, and the costs borne by those industries to recruit, hire, and train new public servants is immense; and

WHEREAS, the community at large is benefited by public servants living in the community in which they serve, as it ensures stability, community involvement, and stronger ties between such public servants and their communities; and

WHEREAS, by creating affordable housing options for public servants on publicly owned property, public servants' time away from home and vehicle miles traveled are reduced, thereby reducing or eliminating their commuting time; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Housing and Community Development be requested to study ways to increase affordable housing options for public servants on publicly owned property.

In conducting its study, the Department of Housing and Community Development (the Department) shall consider (i) local ordinances and zoning requirements; (ii) ways to increase land use flexibility; (iii) options for streamlining an application and approvals process for public servants interested in applying for affordable housing; and (iv) federal, state, and local public, private, and nonprofit programs and fiscal resources available to local education agencies and housing developers. The Department shall require each locality to conduct an assessment of publicly owned properties within its jurisdictional bounds, including land and buildings or structures that are vacant, underutilized, or no longer useful for their original purpose, and report the results of such assessment to the Department. The Department shall utilize the information gathered from the assessments to create a catalog of properties that may be developed or redeveloped into affordable housing options for public servants or properties that benefit the community at large, such as schools and community centers.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Department by the Department of Education. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department for this study, upon request.

The Department shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2023, 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 2024 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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