

1995 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 409

Directing the Commission on Youth to study juvenile status offenders.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 23, 1995
Agreed to by the Senate, February 21, 1995

WHEREAS, Virginia's juvenile code was revised in 1977 to comply with the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act; and

WHEREAS, the 1977 revisions created categories of offenders, including status offender, and established alternative sanctions for the courts in dealing with the various categories of offenders; and

WHEREAS, status offender is defined by the Virginia Code as a minor who commits an act that is prohibited by law which would not be an offense if committed by an adult (e.g., curfew violations, truancy, alcohol violations); and

WHEREAS, the revisions to certain sections of the juvenile code took away the authority of the court to detain status offenders; and

WHEREAS, the state should examine the alternatives provided to the courts for status offenders in light of the projected increases in juvenile crime; and

WHEREAS, alternatives which would effectively handle status offenders could arrest the development of that juvenile into an adult criminal; and

WHEREAS, preventive measures would assist children, localities and the Commonwealth in both the long and short terms; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Commission on Youth be directed to study juvenile status offenders. The Commission is requested to consider the current methods available to the courts for dealing with status offenders and recommend alternatives.

The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1996 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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