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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 426

Offered January 12, 1995

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study the feasibility of establishing a Virginia Emergency Relief Fund to provide state assistance to localities declared natural disasters by the Governor but not approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Patrons—Crouch, Cox, Ingram, Newman, Putney and Ruff; Senators: Hawkins and Schewel

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the State has faced an increased number of unusual natural disasters in recent years; and
WHEREAS, local governments have been confronted with astronomical budget crises in damage and destruction to public buildings and infrastructure due to such natural disasters; and

WHEREAS, these are additional costs for a wide variety of public health and safety measures arising from such natural disasters, including, but not limited to, emergency medical services, shelter, food, curfews, law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, there are no statutory provisions authorizing the Commonwealth of Virginia to provide financial assistance to communities declared natural disasters by the Governor but subsequently not approved by FEMA; and

WHEREAS, such emergency financial assistance should not be subject to individual case evaluations by the General Assembly nor individual case intervention by the Governor; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study the need to evaluate the Commonwealth's policies governing its assistance to Virginia localities where the Governor has declared a natural disaster but the localities have not been approved for assistance by FEMA.

The joint subcommittee shall also study the feasibility of establishing a Virginia Emergency Relief Fund to aid local governments in natural disasters declared by the Governor but denied by FEMA; determine potential sources of revenue for such fund; suggest guidelines and procedures for qualification to receive funds up to 75 percent of any loss.

The joint subcommittee shall consist of eleven members to be appointed as follows: four members of the House of Delegates to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; four members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections and three citizen members from agencies involved with disaster response and relief to be appointed by the Governor

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$6,000.

The joint subcommittee 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.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the study.

INTRODUCED

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