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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 488

Offered January 19, 1995

Requesting the Department of Social Services to determine what state money goes to pay for assistance to illegal aliens and determine if such policies should continue in light of the continued reduction of federal funds.

Patrons—Purkey, Albo, Baker, Cox, Dudley, Forbes, Griffith, Hamilton, Howell, Katzen, Kidd, McDonnell, Newman, Rhodes, Sherwood, Tata, Wagner, Way and Wilkins; Senators: Miller, K.G., Stolle, Stosch and Wampler

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the federal government has the authority to set immigration policy for the nation and has formally accepted the fiscal responsibility for assistance to immigrants and refugees who come to the United States to make a better life for themselves; and

WHEREAS, although the federal government has accepted the responsibility to reimburse the states for services provided to some immigrants, in reality, the federal government has continuously cut back dollars while increasing immigration quotas; and

WHEREAS, the flood of immigration has overwhelmed the states which, because of increased need for programs for immigrants, are bearing the burden for the costs of assistance programs; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the states must deal with the problem of illegal immigrants who are technically ineligible for programs but who need assistance to survive; and

WHEREAS, in 1986, Congress passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) to address the rise in illegal immigration by allowing a one-time amnesty, paving the way for unauthorized immigrants living in the U.S. to become citizens, and providing legal sanction against employers who continued to hire illegal aliens; and

WHEREAS, IRCA not only increased border enforcement, but also created the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) system which requires state and federal benefit-granting agencies to verify that alien applicants for specific federal benefits have the authorized legal status for participation in these programs; and

WHEREAS, the validity of many of the documents presented by some aliens to gain benefits is questionable; and

WHEREAS, some state-funded programs provide limited services to undocumented immigrants because of the concern about the safety and health of the citizenry of the Commonwealth as a whole; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Social Services undertake a study to determine what state funds are going to programs which are serving illegal aliens, either legally or fraudulently, and to ascertain if these various payments should be continued, eliminated, reduced, or in any way altered in light of the continued reductions in federal funds subsidizing these programs.

The Department of Social Services shall provide staff support for the study. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department, upon request.

The Department of Social Services 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 processing legislative documents.

INTRODUCED

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