

1995 SESSION

HOUSE SUBSTITUTE

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 518
FLOOR AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
(Proposed by Delegate Van Landingham
on February 4, 1995)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Van Landingham)

Directing the Virginia State Crime Commission to establish a special task force to study correctional program standards for Virginia's adult correctional institutions.

WHEREAS, recent legislative changes in parole will result in a substantial increase in the prison population of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, because most of Virginia's prison inmates will eventually be released, they should be given opportunities to acquire educational and vocational skills necessary for successful reintegration into their communities following incarceration; and

WHEREAS, it is also important that treatment for substance abuse and sex offenses be made available to ameliorate the problems which contributed to those offenders' crimes; and

WHEREAS, treatment, educational, and vocational programs in Virginia's correctional facilities have been severely limited due to fiscal restraints and inmate overcrowding; and

WHEREAS, such limitations minimize opportunities for inmates to rehabilitate themselves and increase the probability of recidivism upon release; and

WHEREAS, programming and treatment are essential to improve an inmate's chances for successful release and return to a lawful, productive life in the community; and

WHEREAS, future plans for prison construction and operation must include these; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia State Crime Commission be directed to establish a special task force to study educational, transitional and treatment program standards for Virginia's correctional institutions. The task force shall consider the type of facility and level of security, the existing resources for programming, and the schedule of programming based upon length of sentence. Technical assistance shall be provided to the task force by the Department of Corrections and the Department of Correctional Education. Membership of the task force shall include a prison warden, a circuit court judge, an attorney for the Commonwealth, a sheriff, a substance abuse counselor, a sex offender therapist, an academic instructor in one of the prisons, and other representatives whose expertise may assist in this study. The task force will recommend appropriate program standards and guidelines for future funding decisions for Virginia's correctional institutions for consideration by the 1996 General Assembly.

The task force of the State Crime 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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