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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 531**

House Amendments in [ ] — February 4, 1995

*Requesting the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study the effectiveness of the organization, operation, and performance of the Department of Environmental Quality.*

Patrons—Deeds, Armstrong, Brickley, Cranwell, Davies, Grayson, Hall, Hull, Plum, Puller, Reynolds, Shuler, Van Yahres and Woodrum

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the 1992 General Assembly enacted legislation merging the staffs of the Department of Air Pollution Control, the Department of Waste Management, the State Water Control Board, and the Council on the Environment into the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ); and

WHEREAS, DEQ employs in excess of 850 people with 381 full-time employees (FTEs) working in the central office in Richmond and 377 FTEs working in the six regional offices; and

WHEREAS, DEQ's budget is approximately \$82 million, with a proposed reduction of \$1.5 million; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) recently completed a major study of solid waste facility management and found numerous critical gaps in the agency's oversight of the Commonwealth's waste management program including compliance, monitoring and enforcement problems; and

WHEREAS, JLARC's review also found that staffing problems, lack of guidance from central office staff, and the lack of an automated data management system have contributed to inspection problems; and

WHEREAS, the functional area of natural resources is among those scheduled for review by JLARC pursuant to the Legislative Program Review and Evaluation Act (§ 30-64 et seq.) through Senate Joint Resolution No. 18, passed during the 1988 Session of the General Assembly; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission be requested to study the effectiveness of the organization, operation and performance of DEQ. The study shall include, but not be limited to, a review of the Commonwealth's water quality and air quality programs, and the effectiveness of the Department of Environmental Quality in meeting its legislative mandate. The Commission's study shall also include a review of the permitting, compliance, inspection and enforcement programs of the Department; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That DEQ shall cooperate fully as requested and make available all records and information necessary for the completion of work by the Commission and its staff.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to JLARC, upon request.

[ The Joint Legislative Audit and Review 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.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall submit its interim report to the Governor and the 1996 Session of the General Assembly, and shall complete its work in time to submit its final findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1997 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents. ]

ENGROSSED

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