

1995 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 532

Offered January 23, 1995

Creating a joint subcommittee to study the use of electronic equipment (videoconferencing) to improve Virginia's magistrate system.

Patrons—Crouch, Armstrong, Bennett, Clement, Dudley and Reynolds; Senator: Hawkins

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Commission on the Future of Virginia's Judicial System recommended that "an expanded range of magistrate services" be established using full-time magistrates in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the demand for services of magistrates is increasing while funding is not; and

WHEREAS, many rural areas of the Commonwealth struggle to maintain the services required; and

WHEREAS, the use of electronic equipment, specifically "videoconferencing" capability; would improve the delivery of services to more people and with less difficulty for the magistrates; and

WHEREAS, such videoconferencing capability, if implemented, should be uniform across the Commonwealth to assure that systems can electronically communicate; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study the feasibility of incorporating videoconferencing into Virginia's magistrate system. The study shall include (i) determining the current efficacy of magistrate coverage across the Commonwealth, (ii) determining the fiscal impact of such a statewide system, and (iii) investigating cost-effective options for a uniform system.

The joint subcommittee shall consist of seven members, to be appointed as follows: four members of the House of Delegates to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and three members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$5,250.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. Technical assistance shall be provided by the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court and the Department of Information Technology, if requested. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint subcommittee, upon request.

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 processing 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.

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