ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 586

Requesting the Coal Subcommittee of the Virginia Coal and Energy Commission to continue its study of ways to reverse the downward trend in Virginia coal production and employment.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 4, 1995
Agreed to by the Senate, February 21, 1995

WHEREAS, since 1990, the Virginia coal industry has suffered precipitous declines in coal production and employment; and

WHEREAS, this downward spiral is continuing, as evidenced by Virginia Employment Commission data showing that 1,603 unemployment claims were filed by Virginia coal industry employees during the first nine months of 1994; and

WHEREAS, a December 1994 report of the Virginia Center for Coal and Energy Research (VCCER) shows that Virginia's difficult geologic conditions are the primary reason for these declining production and employment figures; and

WHEREAS, according to VCCER's report, for every 1-million-ton decline in Virginia coal production, 876 jobs and $25.2 million in payroll will be lost; and $3.58 million in state and local tax revenue will be lost; and the Commonwealth will incur additional unemployment compensation and public assistance costs; and

WHEREAS, the demand for Virginia coal is expected to decline from 41.6 million tons in 1993 to 38.9 million tons in 1995, 32.9 million tons in 2000, and 31 million tons in 2005; and

WHEREAS, southwest Virginia will be severely impacted by these declines, and significant negative effects will be felt throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Coal Subcommittee of the Virginia Coal and Energy Commission examined many of the issues surrounding the decline of the Virginia coal industry during 1994, but because of the number and complexity of the issues the subcommittee requires additional time to study the matter; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Coal Subcommittee of the Virginia Coal and Energy Commission be requested to continue its ongoing study of ways, including tax credits, of reversing the downward trend in Virginia coal production and employment. In fashioning recommendations, the Coal Subcommittee shall consider the potential impacts on Virginia's existing coal producers and strive to ensure that no Virginia producers are given an unfair competitive advantage over other Virginia producers.

The Division of Legislative Services and the staff of the Senate Finance and House Appropriation Committees shall provide staff support for the study. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Coal Subcommittee, upon request.

The Coal Subcommittee is requested to 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.