

1995 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 599

Continuing the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Needs of Foreign-Born Persons in the Commonwealth.

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

Agreed to by the Senate, February 21, 1995

WHEREAS, the United States is a nation of immigrants, from the first "boat people," the Pilgrims, to the latest ones who come here for a variety of reasons, including political asylum, economic opportunity, and reunion with family members; and

WHEREAS, although the federal government provides some, if limited, funds for certain types of immigrants, namely refugees, state and local governments have had to accept responsibility for providing programs to assist immigrants in assimilating into our society; and

WHEREAS, many immigrants soon become successful, productive members of our society with only little assistance and go on to contribute positively to the economy of the nation; and

WHEREAS, in many cases, immigrants need only minimal assistance, such as English language training, to acculturate and become self-sufficient; and

WHEREAS, the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Needs of Foreign-Born Persons in the Commonwealth has, over the past two years, actively examined the varied needs of immigrants and has made numerous recommendations for positive improvements in the provision of education, health services, legal services and daily life skills training; and

WHEREAS, at the behest of the joint subcommittee, the Judicial Council started a two-part study on the provision of language interpreters in civil matters in the courts of the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Council found compelling reasons to recommend that language interpreters be made available in civil cases but also recommended that additional study is needed to resolve issues of interpreter competency, court personnel training, coordination, and other strategic planning; and

WHEREAS, the joint subcommittee desires to oversee the completion of this study and to make recommendations regarding its implementation; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Needs of Foreign-Born Individuals in the Commonwealth be continued for one additional meeting to review the report of the conclusion of the study of language interpreters in the courtroom by the Judicial Council and to allow the joint subcommittee to act on those recommendations at the 1996 Session of the General Assembly.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$1,200.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint subcommittee, upon request.

The joint subcommittee shall be continued for one year only and shall submit its final 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.

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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