

# 1996 SESSION

ENROLLED

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 12

*Directing the Commission on Family Violence Prevention to study the need for enhanced training for magistrates in the handling of family abuse cases.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 8, 1996

Agreed to by the Senate, February 21, 1996

WHEREAS, 17.4 percent of the homicides occurring in Virginia in 1994 involved victims who were family members or a boy friend or girl friend of the killer; and

WHEREAS, an accused is presumed innocent and, unless found to pose an unreasonable risk of harm to himself or others or to be unlikely to appear at trial, may be released on bail pending trial; and

WHEREAS, the complex interpersonal dynamics of family violence cases make the initial release determinations extraordinarily difficult; and

WHEREAS, additional training and exposure to the sensitive issues involved in these types of cases are needed to ensure the safety of vulnerable family members; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Commission on Family Violence Prevention be directed to study the need for enhanced training for magistrates in the handling of family abuse cases and make recommendations for improving the training in order to enhance the ability of these officers to deal more effectively with cases involving violence directed at family or household members.

The Office of the Executive Secretary of the Supreme Court shall provide technical assistance to the Commission, upon request.

The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its 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.

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