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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 213

Offered January 22, 1996

Requesting the State Health Department and the Virginia Hospital Association to study the ability of emergency service hospitals to provide pediatric emergency medical services.

Patron—Harris

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, daily, children are seen in emergency rooms across the nation and the Commonwealth for a myriad of afflictions, from ear infections and stomach aches to broken bones, violence-inflicted trauma, and life-threatening diseases and conditions; and

WHEREAS, in critical care cases, many children may be rushed to hospital emergency rooms that are not fully equipped to handle the needs of children; and

WHEREAS, recent news accounts reveal known deficiencies in the provision of pediatric emergency medical services, and unfortunately, without proper and immediate care, the outcome for many children is poor; and

WHEREAS, the needs of children in pediatric emergency care situations are receiving increased attention, and some hospitals have begun to address the issue through specially equipped pediatric emergency rooms with child-sized equipment and highly trained specialists; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to ensure that appropriate pediatric emergency medical services are available to Virginia's children; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the State Health Department and the Virginia Hospital Association be requested to study the ability of emergency service hospitals to provide pediatric emergency care services. The State Health Department and the Virginia Hospital Association are requested to survey the emergency care hospitals in Virginia to determine the level of care and the ability of such hospitals to adequately and appropriately serve pediatric emergency medical needs. The Department and the Association shall include in the survey and their deliberations (i) the availability of pediatric emergency medical services and professionally trained specialists; (ii) the availability and accessibility of pediatric emergency rooms and child-sized medical equipment; (iii) pediatric emergency staffing needs, including nurse practitioners, emergency medical technicians, specialists in emergency medicine, surgeons, pediatricians, and other medical professionals and specialists; (iv) adequacy of staff preparation and training to meet pediatric emergency care needs; and (v) such other factors and issues which require consideration and assessment in evaluating pediatric emergency care needs in Virginia.

The Department and the Association shall provide opportunities for the participation of representatives of the Virginia Chapters of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Surgeons, and the American College of Emergency Physicians; the Virginia Nurses Association; and such other medical professionals and specialists as appropriate to ensure an adequate assessment of pediatric emergency medical services needs in Virginia.

The State Health Department shall provide staff support for the study. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department, upon request.

The State Health Department and the Virginia Hospital Association shall complete their work in time to submit their findings and recommendations jointly 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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