

# 1996 SESSION

## HOUSE SUBSTITUTE

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### HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 214

#### AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

(Proposed by the House Committee on Rules

on February 6, 1996)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Stump)

*Requesting the State Department of Health to study the feasibility of establishing a regional Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in southwest Virginia.*

WHEREAS, the regional Office of the Chief Medical Examiner located closest to southwest Virginia is in Roanoke; and

WHEREAS, transportation to the Roanoke Office of the Chief Medical Examiner can require a four-hour to five-hour trip under the best weather and road conditions; and

WHEREAS, the long distance to the nearest medical examiner in southwest Virginia presents a tremendous inconvenience to families, police officers, funeral directors, and court witnesses; and

WHEREAS, the distance to the nearest medical examiner in southwest Virginia delays court cases and imposes substantial lost time for police officers who must attend autopsies and medical examiners who must testify in court; and

WHEREAS, the delays in performing autopsies due to transportation hinders answering families' critical questions during a time of tragedy; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the State Department of Health be requested to study the feasibility of establishing a regional Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in southwest Virginia. The Department shall consider the most appropriate site for such an office; the availability of funds and necessary support services; the potential case load; issues surrounding transportation and the lost time to the family, police officers, funeral directors and the courts; and such other issues as may be appropriate.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the State Department of Health, upon request.

The State Department of Health 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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