

1996 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 38

Offered January 16, 1996

Requesting the Department of Youth and Family Services to develop certain mental health services, assess the need for additional shelters for runaway youth, and to report on statewide planning efforts for youth.

Patrons—Cantor, Baker, Bloxom, Darner, Deeds, Jackson, Jones, J.C., Melvin, Moran and Rhodes;
Senators: Houck, Miller, Y.B. and Reasor

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the state share of funding for community-based services for CHINS, CHINSup, and status offenders has decreased while the need has increased; and

WHEREAS, the recidivism rates for the non-delinquent population suggests that the severity of crime for this population increases with each subsequent contact with the juvenile justice system; and

WHEREAS, there is currently insufficient shelter care bed space available for runaway and homeless youth across the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, there are juveniles who are flight risks and refuse to remain in facilities long enough to receive the necessary treatment services, yet the current overcrowding in secure detention makes it impractical to house these low public safety risk juveniles in secure confinement; and

WHEREAS, many juveniles who come before the court also suffer from mental illness; and

WHEREAS, the majority of juvenile justice professionals acknowledge the need for a facility which is able to serve the mentally ill juvenile offender; and

WHEREAS, the need for interagency planning to serve the multi-agency needs of these juvenile continues; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Youth and Family Services was established in 1989 as the juvenile correctional agency with service and planning responsibilities for the entire juvenile justice population; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Youth and Family Services is requested to undertake the following activities: (i) work with the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, with the input of local community service boards and court service unit directors, to develop a plan which will result in the increase of the provision of mental health services to court-involved youth; (ii) initiate the planning for a multi-use facility to serve the mentally ill juvenile offender; (iii) amend its standards to allow for the outfitting of selected public and private residential facilities to house low safety risk juveniles and runaways who are flight risks with a physically secure component to assure their availability to receive treatment services; (iv) develop and report on their statewide plan for services for at-risk and delinquent youth; and (v) assess the need for additional shelters for runaways.

The Department shall report to the Commission on Youth by November 15, 1996, on the results of their activities in these areas and submit any necessary proposed legislation and budgetary requirements for consideration by the Commission.

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