

# 1996 SESSION

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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 72

*Requesting the Department of Planning and Budget to study the feasibility of establishing a Virginia Emergency Relief Fund to provide state assistance to localities declared disaster areas by the Governor but not approved for assistance by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 1, 1996

Agreed to by the Senate, March 6, 1996

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has faced an increased number of unusual natural disasters in recent years; and

WHEREAS, damage and destruction to public buildings and infrastructure due to such natural disasters have created astronomical budget crises for local governments; and

WHEREAS, there are additional costs for a wide variety of public health and safety measures arising from such natural disasters, including, but not limited to, emergency medical services, shelter, food, and curfew and law-enforcement; and

WHEREAS, there are no statutory provisions authorizing the Commonwealth of Virginia to provide financial assistance to communities declared disaster areas by the Governor but subsequently not approved for assistance by FEMA; and

WHEREAS, such emergency financial assistance should not be subject to individual case evaluations by the General Assembly nor to individual case intervention by the Governor; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Planning and Budget be requested to study the feasibility of establishing a Virginia Emergency Relief Fund to provide state assistance to localities declared disaster areas by the Governor but not approved for assistance by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Department shall also (i) evaluate the Commonwealth's policies governing assistance to Virginia localities declared disaster areas but which have not been approved for assistance by FEMA; (ii) determine potential sources of revenue for such fund; and (iii) suggest guidelines and procedures for qualification to receive funds up to 75 percent of any loss.

The Department 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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