

1996 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 108

Requesting the Secretary of Commerce and Trade to ensure that the Department of Economic Development designate a staff position in the Office of Small Business Development for an individual to serve as Virginia's Women's Business Advocate.

Agreed to by the Senate, February 27, 1996

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 23, 1996

WHEREAS, the Virginia Small Business Development Center (VSBDC) has completed its study of the barriers to the formation, financing, and operation of women-owned businesses in Virginia as directed by Senate Joint Resolution No. 102 (1994); and

WHEREAS, the VSBDC made a specific recommendation in the resulting Senate Document No. 39 (1995) to designate an individual on the staff of the Department of Economic Development's Office of Small Business Development to be Virginia's Women's Business Advocate; and

WHEREAS, this recommendation mirrors many other states that have such advocates to assist in developing programs for women business owners and to study closely the needs and successes of this fast-growing economic sector; and

WHEREAS, the United States House of Representatives Committee on Small Business has concluded that the increase in women entrepreneurs is the most significant recent economic phenomenon in the United States; and

WHEREAS, women-owned businesses are playing an increasingly vital role in Virginia's economy; and

WHEREAS, there remain many unnecessary hurdles and socioeconomic obstacles for women who own businesses, particularly small businesses; and

WHEREAS, such a designation will have a positive impact on eliminating obstacles to women-owned business growth in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the designated individual will also fill an all-important ombudsman role for women-owned companies across the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Secretary of Commerce and Trade be requested to ensure that the Department of Economic Development designate a staff position in the Office of Small Business Development for an individual to serve as Virginia's Women's Business Advocate on or before July 1, 1996.

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