

1996 SESSION

ENROLLED

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 70

Continuing the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Abatement of Lead-based Paint.

Agreed to by the Senate, March 4, 1996

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 29, 1996

WHEREAS, the tragedy of lead poisoning is that it affects children more frequently and permanently than adults because children commonly put objects in their mouths, and as developing individuals, they metabolize and absorb lead quickly; and

WHEREAS, lead poisoning is a danger to any young child living in a home built before 1980, presenting the risk of permanent brain damage; and

WHEREAS, ingestion or inhalation of lead, particularly by young children, can cause severe illness and even death; and

WHEREAS, currently there is some controversy about the efficacy of big abatement projects in terms of costs and effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, federal and state efforts to prevent lead poisoning and abate lead have resulted in some reductions in the numbers of children with dangerous blood-lead levels; and

WHEREAS, the danger to children in Virginia continues to warrant concern, with Virginia localities reporting 1,436 incidents of children with elevated blood-lead levels from July 1993 through October 1994; and

WHEREAS, the number of children in Virginia with elevated blood-lead levels is undoubtedly higher than reported, especially in view of the large numbers of old houses located in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, since 1993, the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Abatement of Lead-based Paint has provided the necessary legislative oversight to preserve the Commonwealth's eligibility to receive the federal grant for lead abatement; and

WHEREAS, the joint subcommittee met, considered the issues, and recommended 1994 legislation, including Senate Bill No. 405, establishing the lead contractors, professionals, and workers' certification program as required for receipt of the federal grant for lead abatement; and

WHEREAS, last year the joint subcommittee again proposed legislation, including necessary revisions of the statutes to resolve difficulties arising because of lack of final federal regulations; and

WHEREAS, the joint subcommittee continues to believe that a sensible, long-range strategy for lead abatement is essential in order to safeguard Virginia's children and because of the high costs of lead abatement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Abatement of Lead-based Paint be continued. The members duly appointed to serve pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution No. 245 of 1993 shall continue to serve, except that any vacancies shall be filled as provided in the enabling resolution.

The joint subcommittee will continue to monitor lead-poisoning and abatement issues, with particular emphasis on children. The joint subcommittee will also: (i) follow the implementation of the certification program and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development's federal grant for lead abatement, (ii) evaluate the federal funding and requirements related to lead abatement, and (iii) make such recommendations as it deems appropriate to facilitate Virginia's resolution of lead abatement issues.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$1,300.

The Division of Legislative Services shall continue to provide staff support for the study. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint subcommittee, upon request.

The joint subcommittee 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.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the study.

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