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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 570

Offered January 20, 1997

*Continuing the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Status and Needs of African-American Males in Virginia.*

Patrons—Cunningham, Christian, Crittenden, McEachin and Spruill

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, House Joint Resolution No. 167 (1996) established a joint subcommittee to study the status and needs of African-American males in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the joint subcommittee has determined that African-American males face seemingly insurmountable odds, and African-American males are fragile, vulnerable, and endangered; and

WHEREAS, homicide is the leading cause of death among African-American males between the ages of 15 and 24 years, and every 18 minutes an African-American child is arrested for a drug offense; and

WHEREAS, African-Americans constitute over 50 percent of all men in the criminal justice system, and there are more African-American males who are incarcerated or under the supervision of the court than are enrolled in college; and

WHEREAS, information provided the joint subcommittee indicate that these persons may find it more difficult, for many reasons, to re-assimilate into society when they are released; and

WHEREAS, persistent unemployment and under-employment plagues the African-American community, resulting in 44.1 percent of African-American children living in poverty in 1991; and

WHEREAS, compared to the total population, African-American males have a 68 percent higher death rate from heart disease, a 90 percent higher stroke rate, a 71 percent higher cancer rate, and an 86 percent higher diabetes rate; and

WHEREAS, educational achievement among African-American students continues to lag behind white and other racial and ethnic groups; and

WHEREAS, African-Americans, particularly males, are more likely to be suspended, expelled, or identified for special education programs; and

WHEREAS, the joint subcommittee has worked diligently to identify and address the factors and barriers which impede the welfare and development of African-American males; but, because the issues and problems are complex, profound, and pervasive, more time is needed in order that the joint subcommittee might complete its work; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Status and Needs of African-American Males in Virginia be continued. The members duly appointed pursuant to HJR 167 (1996) shall continue to serve, and any vacancies shall be filled as provided in the enabling resolution.

The joint subcommittee shall continue its examination of the issues and objectives enumerated in HJR 167 (1996), consider such other issues related to its charge which it may deem necessary, and recommend appropriate and feasible alternatives designed to address, facilitate, promote, and assist African-American males in Virginia in reaching their fullest potential.

The joint subcommittee may continue its consultation with persons with expertise in psychiatry, the health care delivery system, social services, corrections, public and higher education, economic development, criminology, job training, community development, substance abuse prevention and treatment, family violence prevention, counseling, the religious community, and such other persons who may assist the joint subcommittee in the furtherance of its work, all of whom shall serve in a voluntary and advisory capacity to the joint subcommittee.

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 direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$9,000. An estimated \$1,000 is allocated for materials and resources for the joint subcommittee. Such expenses shall be funded from the operational budget of the Clerk of the House of Delegates.

The joint subcommittee shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1998 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.

INTRODUCED

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