

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA -- 1997 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 613

Requesting the Department of Criminal Justice Services to undertake a study to review previous survey efforts measuring drug and alcohol use by young people across the Commonwealth.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 20, 1997

Agreed to by the Senate, February 19, 1997

WHEREAS, recently released national studies verify the increase in drug and alcohol use by adolescents; and

WHEREAS, the University of Michigan's "Monitoring the Future, National High School Drug Use" study revealed an increase in the use of drugs by secondary school students from 1991 to 1995; and

WHEREAS, specifically the study found that, in 1995, the use of illicit drugs by eighth grade students over the previous 12 months had nearly doubled since 1991, from 11 to 21 percent; and

WHEREAS, in Virginia, during the 1993-94 school year, 1,607 students were found to be in possession of drugs on school grounds, and an additional 1,106 were found to be in possession of alcohol; and

WHEREAS, state juvenile arrest rates for drug possession increased 285 percent from 1990 to 1995; and

WHEREAS, jurisdictions which operate Offices on Youth under the auspices of the Department of Juvenile Justice are required every three years to survey their youth population on risk behaviors, including the use of alcohol and drugs; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services annually extrapolates adolescent substance abuse rates from the National Household Survey, and conducts an analysis of community risk factors compiled from data gathered by community services boards; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Education previously conducted Youth Risk Behavior Study Surveys, developed by the National Centers for Disease Control, which were administered by local school divisions every two years; and

WHEREAS, the State Council on Higher Education for Virginia conducted a survey in 1993 of drug and alcohol use by college students; and

WHEREAS, none of the Virginia-based survey efforts have been cross-analyzed to provide a baseline on drug and alcohol use among young people across the state; and

WHEREAS, without comprehensive data analysis, the state and communities are hindered in their intervention efforts to respond effectively to teen drug and alcohol usage; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Criminal Justice Services be requested to undertake a study to review previous survey efforts measuring drug and alcohol use by young people across the Commonwealth. This study, when completed, should provide a comprehensive compilation of survey efforts measuring adolescent drug and alcohol use in Virginia which can be used by localities to assist them in their intervention efforts.

The Departments of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, Education, and Juvenile Justice are requested to provide technical support for and guidance to the study effort.

The Department of Criminal Justice Services 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.

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