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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 233
AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
 (Proposed by the Senate Committee on Rules
 on January 21, 1997)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Senator Waddell)

Expressing the sense of the General Assembly regarding development and implementation of a highway incident management system.

WHEREAS, national statistics show that highway incidents cause 60 percent of the vehicle hours lost to traffic congestion, that approximately 20 percent of all highway accidents are caused by a previous accident, and that a 20-minute delay due to one blocked lane causes a one-to-two-mile backup and over 2,000 vehicle hours of delay; and

WHEREAS, there are problems associated with the management of highway incidents, particularly those involving multiple agencies, each with its own fundamentally different perspective on the intent of highway incident management; and

WHEREAS, the paramount objective in all highway incident mitigation efforts—protecting the safety of highway travelers and emergency response personnel—requires that fire, emergency medical service, law-enforcement and transportation agencies understand and be sensitive to each other's needs when operating at highway incidents; and

WHEREAS, one action that fire, emergency medical service, law-enforcement and transportation agencies might prudently and productively undertake to reduce conflicts in clearing a highway incident is to adopt and implement a multi-disciplinary highway incident management system; and

WHEREAS, within such a system, the responsibilities and duties of key agencies should be predesignated by formal agreement so that the system can meet the needs and concerns of each agency; and

WHEREAS, coordination of multi-disciplinary and multi-jurisdictional resources responding to major emergencies cannot be left to voluntary cooperation alone; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Virginia Department of Transportation's Statewide Incident Management Committee be responsible for the development and implementation of a statewide highway incident management system; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That this system be developed and adopted in conjunction with representatives of the Virginia Department of Emergency Services, the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, the Virginia Department of State Police, the Virginia Department of Transportation, the State Fire Chiefs Association of Virginia, the Virginia Association of Professional Firefighters, the Virginia Association of Volunteer Rescue Squads, the Virginia Fire Services Council, the Virginia Sheriffs Association, the Virginia State Firefighters Association, and the Virginia Chiefs of Police Association; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That this statewide standard highway incident management system be adopted and used by emergency response personnel to manage all highway incident operations; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That due consideration be given to adopting the highway incident command system, as taught by the National Emergency Training Center, as the system for managing all highway incident operations within the Commonwealth of Virginia; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to the State Coordinator of the Virginia Department of Emergency Services, the Executive Director of the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, and the Superintendent of the Virginia Department of State Police, the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the Presidents of the State Fire Chiefs Association of Virginia, the Virginia Association of Professional Firefighters, the Virginia Association of Volunteer Rescue Squads, the Virginia Fire Services Council, the Virginia Sheriffs Association, the Virginia State Firefighters Association and the Virginia Chiefs of Police Association in order that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly in this matter.