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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 234

Offered January 14, 1997

Expressing the sense of the General Assembly that Virginia's private sector be encouraged to continue its support of innovative efforts by the Virginia Health Care Foundation to enhance access to primary and preventive health care for Virginia's uninsured and medically underserved citizens.

Patrons—Woods, Gartlan, Lambert, Martin, Marye and Walker; Delegates: Bloxom, Brickley, Clement, Connally, Cunningham, Darner, Diamonstein, Hall, Heilig, Keating, Melvin, Morgan and Thomas

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, nearly one million Virginians are uninsured and have no access to health care; and
WHEREAS, the Commonwealth contains 56 health professional shortage areas where there may be only one doctor serving over 3,500 citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Governor, the General Assembly, and the Joint Commission on Health Care initiated the Virginia Health Care Foundation in 1992 to promote and support community-based projects that increase access to primary and preventive health care for Virginia's uninsured and medically underserved citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Health Care Foundation now funds 42 innovative projects throughout Virginia which are public/private partnerships typically involving local hospitals, businesses, health care providers, and volunteers; and

WHEREAS, one-half of the Foundation's current projects are designed to increase the number of primary care providers in Virginia's medically underserved areas; and

WHEREAS, in fiscal year 1996, the Foundation's projects provided primary and preventive health care to nearly 39,000 uninsured and medically underserved Virginians throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Foundation's strategy of rigorous project evaluation, three-year limited funding, and a focus on long-term community support has resulted in an impressive continuation of 20 of the first 23 projects to "graduate" from the Foundation's support; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Health Care Foundation undertook several Leadership Initiatives in 1996 to increase access to primary care in medically underserved communities, including The Pharmacy Connection—an interactive computer software program which helps obtain free medications for the working poor; Virginia Health Careers '96-'98—a resource manual to interest secondary students in health careers in Virginia; and the Healthy Communities Loan Fund—a \$4.2 million low interest-rate loan fund available to medical providers in underserved areas, made possible through the cooperation of First Virginia Banks, Inc., and the Practice Sights Initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; and

WHEREAS, the Foundation has received a one-million-dollar challenge grant from the Theresa A. Thomas Memorial Foundation to stimulate additional support from Virginia's private sector; and

WHEREAS, the Foundation provides a tremendous return on the Commonwealth's investment by leveraging nearly six dollars for every dollar it spends; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Health Care Foundation's private sector partners include the Theresa A. Thomas Memorial Foundation; Trigon Blue Cross Blue Shield; the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association; Columbia Capital Corporation; Carilion Health System; INOVA Health System; Crestar; Johnston Memorial Hospital; First Virginia Banks, Inc.; Jefferson National Bank; Virginia Power; KPMG Peat Marwick; Mays and Valentine; McGuire Woods Battle & Boothe; Capital One Corporation; Cadmus Communications; E.L. Hamm and Associates; KOL Bio-Medical Instruments, Inc.; Kaiser Permanente; MAMSI Health Plans; QualChoice of Virginia; Sentara; and the Virginia Association of HMOs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That it is the sense of the General Assembly that these fine corporate citizens be commended for supporting the dynamic and rapid evolution of the Virginia Health Care Foundation and making significant contributions to increasing access to primary and preventive health care for Virginia's uninsured and underserved citizens; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the General Assembly encourage Virginia's other corporate citizens to contribute their various talents and resources to the efforts of the Virginia Health Care Foundation.

INTRODUCED

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