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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 262

Offered January 15, 1997

Establishing the Metropolitan Hampton Roads Regional Urban Services Study Commission to study the feasibility of establishing a regional administrative agency to provide urban services in the Hampton Roads region.

Patron—Quayle

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Virginia's unique authorization of independent cities predates the 18th century when essential urban services could be provided effectively and efficiently by city governments, leaving rural counties to their conduct of agrarian pursuits; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's burgeoning population has concentrated in 20th century conurbations, designated metropolitan areas, where essential urban services must be developed, funded and shared by many competing local governments; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth must ultimately ensure that a metropolitan area can provide five essential regional urban services effectively and efficiently:

1. Managing wastewater and its reuse;
2. Managing solid waste collection, disposal and recycling;
3. Providing a potable water supply;
4. Maintaining transportation networks employing highways, waterways and mass transit; and
5. Coordinate regional land use planning and urban growth management; and

WHEREAS, a metropolitan area of 2,000 square miles with 1.5 million residents, housed in a cluster of 15 diverse cities and counties, has coalesced around the Hampton Roads harbor where population growth and expansion persist, challenging this region to provide essential urban services; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That a Metropolitan Hampton Roads Urban Services Study Commission be established to study the feasibility of establishing a regional administrative agency to provide urban services in the Hampton Roads region. The Commission shall be composed of fourteen members, which shall include five legislative members and nine nonlegislative and ex officio members as follows: two members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; three members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker; the Chairman of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission; the Chairman of the Hampton Roads Sanitation District Commission; and the two "urban-at-large" members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The five members of the Commission on Local Government shall serve as nonvoting, ex officio members.

In conducting its study, the Commission shall seek answers to nine questions:

1. Would it be feasible to create a regional administrative agency and from the outset specify that its sources of revenue would be limited to fees for services rendered, grants from federal and state agencies and private funds accepted by the Metropolitan Hampton Roads Council?

2. Would "Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council" be an appropriate name for this regional administrative agency, and would this name properly signify a political subdivision of this Commonwealth and help to identify southeastern Virginia in its quest for economic diversification?

3. Would a governing body of 13 members be adequate to carry out assigned duties and functions of this administrative Metropolitan Council?

4. Would it be appropriate for the Governor, with the advice and consent of the Senate and the House of Delegates, to name the 13 members of the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council?

5. Would it be practical to nominate resident members of the Council from among the 25 House of Delegates districts into which metropolitan Hampton Roads is divided?

6. Would it be reasonable to assume that ultimately the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council could assume administrative responsibility for providing five essential regional urban services:

- a. Managing wastewater and its reuse;
- b. Providing a potable water supply;
- c. Maintaining, in conjunction with the Commonwealth Transportation Board, funding for metropolitan transportation networks employing roadways, waterways and mass transit;
- d. Managing solid waste, including collection, disposal and recycling; and
- e. Coordinating regional physical development through land use planning, zoning and urban growth management?

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60 7. Would it be feasible to transfer operations of the Hampton Roads Sanitation District to the
61 Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council?

62 8. Would it be feasible to transfer staff operations of the Hampton Roads Planning District to the
63 Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council while retaining the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
64 as an official advisory body?

65 9. Would it be feasible to grant authority to the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Council to regionalize
66 operations related to solid waste management and the provision of a potable water supply?

67 The Commission shall conduct at least one advertised public hearing each year in the Hampton
68 Roads area.

69 The direct costs of the study shall not exceed \$50,000 per year.

70 The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. Technical assistance
71 shall be provided by the Commission on Local Government. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall
72 provide assistance to the Commission, upon request.

73 The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the
74 Governor and the 1999 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division
75 of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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