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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 372

Offered January 20, 1997

Continuing the Joint Subcommittee to Study the Comprehensive Services Act.

Patrons—Houck and Bolling; Delegates: Baker and Scott

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, after a two-year study and with the preliminary results from five demonstration projects, legislation resulted which created "a collaborative system of services and funding that is child-centered, family-focused and community-based when addressing the strengths and needs of troubled and at-risk youths and their families" through early, least restrictive, individually-designed, and family-oriented services that cut across all service agencies, known as the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA); and

WHEREAS, localities received various assurances with regard to maintenance of state funding, payment for unanticipated costs, and a transition process for localities to evolve into the system; and

WHEREAS, even though several studies and evaluations have been done and recommendations made, many localities are still experiencing cost and service delivery difficulties, while some local programs have been very successful at controlling costs and achieving improved services levels; and

WHEREAS, testimony presented to this joint subcommittee indicated that caseloads grew 17.2 percent between 1994 and 1995, from 9,536 to 11,180 children, and the average cost of services grew 2.9 percent, from \$10,964 to \$11,284 per child; and

WHEREAS, during the 1996 Session, an additional \$11.8 million in state funds was approved for comprehensive services, but, in June, expenditure estimates were revised upward again, requiring an additional \$11.5 million in state funds; and

WHEREAS, total costs for fiscal year 1996 are now estimated at \$145 million; and

WHEREAS, in addition, a number of other fiscal and management issues were identified to the joint subcommittee, many of which will have an adverse impact on localities as they face the prospect of paying additional dollars for services; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, the General Assembly also passed Senate Joint Resolution No. 123 which directed the Joint Legislative and Audit Review Commission (JLARC) to study the administration of the CSA, including examining the information, administrative, financial and accounting requirements; and

WHEREAS, SJR 123 also directed JLARC to study the CSA's forecasting of utilization and delivery of services and to recommend improvements in program services and strategies for cost containment, but the results of that study are not due until 1998; and

WHEREAS, the joint subcommittee, in its study, identified a number of potential issues which need to be resolved, but felt that it would be inappropriate to make any recommendations at this time in light of the pending JLARC study; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Subcommittee Studying the Comprehensive Services Act be continued to monitor and provide assistance to the JLARC study of the Comprehensive Services Act. The membership of the joint subcommittee shall continue as provided in SJR 93 (1996), with vacancies filled in the same manner.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$2,100.

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 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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