

1998 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 124

Offered January 23, 1998

Requesting the State Board for Community Colleges to study the feasibility of establishing technology centers to focus on workforce training and education.

Patrons—Davies and Howell; Senator: Miller, K.G.

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, creating a stronger, better-prepared workforce and providing for the continuing education of the current and future workforce is clearly of great importance to Virginia's continued economic growth and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, an increasingly global marketplace, characterized by sophisticated communications, ever-changing computer technology, and intense foreign competition, has prompted the implementation of state economic development policies emphasizing not only quality physical infrastructure and technology transfer, but also the preparation of an educated and highly skilled work force; and

WHEREAS, because individuals currently in the workforce must also keep pace with ongoing changes in technology and business, continuing education and workforce training must be available to provide opportunities to acquire or upgrade job skills; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that 92 percent of the Commonwealth's workers for the year 2000 are "already working," the Governor's Advisory Committee on Workforce Virginia 2000: A Partnership for Excellence noted in 1991 that "Virginia must provide a structure and an incentive system that encourages employers to look first to their existing cadre of loyal employees and to recognize that investing in their human resources is the key to success in a global economy"; and

WHEREAS, the demand on community colleges by business and industry for continuous education, training, and retraining to provide a highly skilled workforce is steadily increasing; and

WHEREAS, community colleges have attempted to bridge the gap between existing and required workplace skills, emerging as the primary provider of workforce retraining, aside from employers themselves; and

WHEREAS, the creation of technology centers designed to address workforce training and education might facilitate the establishment of community incentive partnerships, expand dual enrollment opportunities, and enhance linkages with public schools to increase the use of technology in education; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the State Board for Community Colleges be requested to study the feasibility of establishing technology centers to focus on workforce training and education. The Board shall consider, among other things, (i) the appropriate placement and governance of such centers and the role of community colleges in supporting these centers; (ii) ways in which these centers might facilitate the establishment of community incentive partnerships and expand dual enrollment opportunities; (iii) coordination between the mission of these centers and current state and local initiatives addressing workforce training and education; (iv) the work and recommendations of recent legislative and executive branch studies focusing on workforce training; (v) linkages between education and business that may promote workforce training; and (vi) such other issues as it deems appropriate.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Board, upon request.

The State Board of Community Colleges shall complete its work in time to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1999 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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