

# 1998 SESSION

ENROLLED

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 145

*Requesting the Governor, Attorney General, and Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to develop a plan for protecting Virginia's tobacco farmers.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 12, 1998

Agreed to by the Senate, March 10, 1998

WHEREAS, tobacco is Virginia's top cash crop, with receipts of \$188 million in 1996; and  
WHEREAS, many Southside and Southwest Virginia communities are economically dependent on tobacco farming; and

WHEREAS, over 27,000 Virginians are employed in the tobacco industry, and as many as 120,457 jobs are supported by tobacco-related activities; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly is aware of the national tobacco settlement announced on June 20, 1997, negotiated by a core group of state Attorney Generals, counsel for class action plaintiffs, representatives of the public health community, and the tobacco industry; and

WHEREAS, the tobacco industry has committed itself to providing \$368.5 billion in funding over the next 25 years under the June 20, 1997, agreement, subject to adjustments for inflation and changes in sales volume, with additional payment obligations indefinitely thereafter; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has determined that Virginia has a vital interest in securing its fair share of that industry funding to help pay for state and local programs to reduce tobacco use by minors and for other important public programs; and

WHEREAS, the interests of tobacco growers may not be adequately addressed by a proposed national settlement; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Governor, Attorney General, and Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services be requested to develop a plan for protecting Virginia's tobacco farmers. The plan shall include recommendations for use of Virginia's share of the tobacco industry's payments under the June 20, 1997, agreement for the protection of tobacco farmers; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Congress of the United States be urged to enact legislation implementing the June 20, 1997, agreement and allocate to the States, including Virginia, their fair share of the tobacco industry's payments under the agreement; and, be it

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit copies of this resolution to the Virginia Congressional delegation, the Virginia Liaison Office, the Governor, the Attorney General, and the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in order that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly in this matter.

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