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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 193

Offered January 26, 1998

*Establishing a joint subcommittee to study the educational needs of emotionally disturbed students with visual and hearing impairments.*

Patrons—Hanger, Maxwell and Williams; Delegates: Behm and Landes

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, it is estimated that 12 percent of the population may have special needs, making them eligible for special education services, pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), P. L. 101-476; and

WHEREAS, among such students requiring special education services are those with emotional disturbances, characterized by an "inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors"; and

WHEREAS, such students also demonstrate "inappropriate behavior and an inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers"; and

WHEREAS, such students develop "physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems, and the aforementioned characteristics are exhibited over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects educational performance"; and

WHEREAS, unfortunately, many students with emotional disturbances may also have other disabilities, including visual and hearing impairments that further impact their ability to learn; and

WHEREAS, alone, each disability requires specialized treatment and attention, and students with severe or multiple disabilities require ongoing, extensive support in more than one major life activity; and

WHEREAS, a variety of medical problems may accompany severe disabilities and educational programs need to incorporate a variety of components and related services to address the educational needs of such students; and

WHEREAS, important outcomes of appropriate education for these students are school to work transition, job training, and life skills that help them live productively as they grow older; and

WHEREAS, assessing the needs of students with emotional disturbances who also have visual or hearing impairments would facilitate improvements and enhancements in their education; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study the educational needs of emotionally disturbed students with visual and hearing impairments. The joint subcommittee shall be composed of nine members, as follows: four members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections, and five members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall determine the number of students with emotional disturbances who also have visual or hearing impairments; identify and review the educational programs available for such students in Virginia; determine the need for instructional staff and their qualifications to teach such students; evaluate the educational needs of such students over the next five, 10, and 15 years; and recommend such changes and alternatives to ensure the availability of quality special education programs for these students.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$6,750.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. Technical assistance shall be provided by the Department of Education and the Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind at Hampton and Staunton. 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 1999 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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