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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 38

Senate Amendments in [] — February 12, 1998

Requesting the Secretary of Commerce and Trade and the Secretary of Education to jointly develop a statewide strategy to triple the number of computer scientists, engineers, and other technologically-skilled workers in Virginia by 2002.

Patrons—Howell, Newman, Schrock and Ticer; Delegates: Almand, Bennett, Diamonstein, May, Plum and Scott

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Center for Innovative Technology (the "CIT"), Virginia Chamber of Commerce, and Virginia Technology Council jointly sponsored the report, "Building a Commonwealth of Technology: A Blueprint for Technology-Based Economic Growth in Virginia" (the "Blueprint"), which was published in August 1997; and

WHEREAS, the Blueprint is the product of two statewide technology summits (held in Norfolk in January 1997 and Richmond in May 1997) involving the efforts of hundreds of business leaders from six regions of Virginia (Greater Charlottesville, Greater Richmond, Hampton Roads, New Century Region, Northern Virginia, and Virginia's Region 2000) and seven technology industry sectors (aerospace technologies, biotechnology/biomedical applications, energy technology, environmental technology, high-performance manufacturing, information technology and telecommunications, and transportation technologies); and

WHEREAS, the Blueprint is based on the belief that currently, Virginia is in a second tier of technology states, but has the potential to become a global leader in certain technology areas; and

WHEREAS, to seize global leadership, the Blueprint proposes a series of two-, three-, and five-year and long-term goals; and

WHEREAS, among the recommendations proposed by the Blueprint to assist Virginia's emergence as a world-class technology leader is to triple the number of two- and four-year college graduates in engineering, computer science, and related technical jobs by 2002; and

WHEREAS, a report by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV), "Study of the Demand for Computer Scientists, Engineers, and Other Technologically Skilled Workers in Virginia" (Senate Document No. 22 [1998]), indicates that a number of recent studies have been conducted by various organizations attempting to quantify the much-publicized shortage of technology workers in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the studies suggest that, to keep pace with the growing demand, the Commonwealth needs to supply approximately 110,000 new technology workers over the next five years (22,000 workers per year); and

WHEREAS, even though all of these 22,000 workers will not be required to possess a formal degree, the estimate of the number of workers needed does not take into account jobs which will require some level of technological competency but are not completely technological in nature (e.g., bank tellers, insurance agents, retail merchants, etc.); and

WHEREAS, the responsibility for implementing the Blueprint's recommendation to triple the number of two- and four-year college graduates in engineering, computer science, and related technical [jobs areas] by 2002 is the shared responsibility of Virginia's higher education, K-12 education, and private sector communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Secretary of Commerce and Trade and the Secretary of Education be requested to jointly develop a statewide strategy to triple the number of computer scientists, engineers, and other technologically-skilled workers in Virginia by 2002. Such strategy shall consider higher education, K-12 education, the use of financial incentives (e.g., tax credits and tuition assistance), partnerships with the private sector, and adequate representation of women and minorities in these fields. The Secretaries shall consult with individuals from and organizations representing Virginia's high technology industry.

Staff support shall be provided to the study by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia [, the Department of Business Assistance, the Virginia Economic Development Partnership,] and the Center for Innovative Technology. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Secretaries for their study, upon request.

The Secretaries shall report on the status of the development of their strategy to the Joint Commission on Technology and Science on or before October 15, 1998, and shall complete their work in time to submit their findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1999 Session of the

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60 General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for
61 the processing of legislative documents.