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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 68

Offered January 22, 1998

Requesting the Virginia State Crime Commission's to continue its study of Megan's Law.

Patrons—Howell, Houck, Schrock, Stolle and Walker; Delegates: Almand, Davies, Deeds, Guest and Woodrum

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Congress passed an amendment to the Jacob Wetterling Crimes Against Children Act, known as "Megan's Law," in April 1996; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia State Crime Commission undertook a study to formulate Virginia's response to the federal legislation; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia State Crime Commission made a number of recommendations for legislative measures to improve the registration and tracking of sex offenders to the 1997 Virginia General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia State Crime Commission continued its study of "Megan's Law" in 1997 to develop legislation which enhances public access to information on sex offenders living in the community; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia State Crime Commission has adopted a recommendation for legislation which will provide a Virginia web site on "sexually violent offenders" on the internet and allow public access to information on sex offenders registered on the Virginia Sex Offender and Crimes Against Children Registry for introduction to the 1998 Virginia General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the proposed legislation will make major policy changes on the release of information on certain convicted sex offenders in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the methodology for access to sex offender information will be utilizing the latest technology to improve the time and accuracy of providing the information; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that the implementation of the legislation be monitored closely to insure that the goal of enhanced and more expedient availability of sex offender information is achieved; and

WHEREAS, it is important to promote public safety and provide the public with the necessary information to take appropriate safety measures; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Virginia State Crime Commission is requested to continue its study of "Megan's Law" to provide oversight on the implementation of notification legislation and to develop appropriate community education materials to further enhance the public's knowledge and information on the dynamics of sex offending for development of personal safety strategies; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Virginia State Crime commission will seek Edward G Byrne grant funds through the Department of Criminal Justice Services to assist in the oversight process and to develop a database for the evaluation of the community notification legislation.

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

The Commission 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.

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