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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 504

House Amendments in [] — February 5, 1999

Requesting the Board of Health Professions, in cooperation with the Department of Health Professions and other state agencies as may be appropriate, to evaluate the merit of establishing an independent board of physical therapy for the purpose of regulating physical therapists and physical therapist assistants.

Patron—DeBoer

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, physical therapists and physical therapist assistants [~~are~~ currently constitute] one of 13 professions currently regulated by the Board of Medicine; and

WHEREAS, the Advisory Board on Physical Therapy may engage in fact-finding and advise the Board of Medicine on credentialing and disciplinary cases involving physical therapy licensees, but its members do not have the authority to participate in Board of Medicine executive session deliberations, informal conference committees, or in decision-making related to credentials; and

WHEREAS, the Advisory Board on Physical Therapy may advise the Board of Medicine on the development and amendment of regulations for the practice of physical therapy, but its members cannot vote on proposed or final regulations; and

WHEREAS, there are 4598 physical therapist and physical therapist assistant licensees, more than the number regulated by eight of the 12 independent health regulatory boards; and

WHEREAS, there are almost twice as many physical therapist and physical therapist assistant licensees as any other profession regulated by the Board of Medicine with the exception of physicians; and

WHEREAS, a recent study of the Department of Health Professions by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission noted a Department of Health Professions staff concern that members of the Board of Medicine do not give adequate attention to the matters involving many of the other health professions the Board is responsible for regulating; and

WHEREAS, physical therapists and physical therapist assistants are regulated by an independent board in at least 31 other states; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Board of Health Professions, in cooperation with the Department of Health Professions and other state agencies as may be appropriate, be requested to evaluate the merit of establishing an independent board of physical therapy for the purpose of regulating physical therapists and physical therapist assistants. In its evaluation, the Board of Health Professions shall invite participation from members of the Advisory Board on Physical Therapy and the Virginia Physical Therapy Association. The Board of Health Professions shall consider the way other states regulate physical therapist professionals.

The Board of Health Professions shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, and the General Assembly by November 1, 1999, as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

ENGROSSED

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