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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 506

Offered January 13, 1999

Establishing a joint legislative subcommittee to study the structure and management of the Virginia Farmers Market System.

Patrons—Bloxom; Senator: Norment

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, in 1986 the General Assembly found and declared that agriculture "is important to the prosperity of the Commonwealth, and is a major source of income to a large segment of the Commonwealth's population;" and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly also declared that the "establishment of a Virginia wholesale, shipping point and retail farmers market system throughout the Commonwealth, in cooperation with local cities, towns, counties or combinations thereof, will enhance the overall economy of Virginia's agricultural industry and promote tourism;" and

WHEREAS, in response to these declarations the General Assembly created a Farmers Market Board to implement and promote the development of farmers markets throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, much of the authority for implementation of the development of a farmers market system and its management was transferred to the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Service in 1989; and

WHEREAS, concern has been expressed that the management of individual markets in the Farmers Market System has been too far removed from the localities in which they are located; and

WHEREAS, the declarations made in 1986 are just as true today as they were then, and farmers are under new and increasing pressures affecting their livelihood; and

WHEREAS, a thorough analysis of the Farmers Market System is needed to assure that the operation, management, location and promotion of farmers markets is being conducted in cooperation with localities and that the system is assisting local markets and farmers to the greatest degree and in the most efficient manner possible; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint legislative study be established to study the structure and management of the Virginia Farmer's Market System. The joint subcommittee shall be composed of nine members, which shall include six legislative members and three nonlegislative citizen members as follows: four members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker according to Rule 16 of the House Rules; two members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; two citizens to be appointed by the Speaker; and one citizen to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall examine the Farmers Market System management structure and the relationship of that structure to the localities and farmers each market serves and shall make recommendations on any needed changes.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$ 4,800.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. Technical assistance shall be provided by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. 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 2000 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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