

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA -- 1999 SESSION

ENROLLED

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 527

Directing the Joint Commission on Health Care to review staffing requirements for nursing home facilities and adult care residences to ensure adequate levels of care and adequate enforcement of these standards.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 5, 1999

Agreed to by the Senate, February 18, 1999

WHEREAS, elderly and disabled citizens are very important to the Commonwealth and every effort should be made to ensure that they receive quality care in nursing home facilities and adult care residences; and

WHEREAS, Article I (§ 32.1-123 et seq.) of Chapter 5 of Title 32.1 of the Code of Virginia requires nursing home facilities to be licensed and the State Board of Health promulgates regulations for these nursing home facilities, and Article I (§ 63.1-172 et seq.) of Chapter 9 of Title 63.1 of the Code of Virginia requires adult care residences to be licensed and the State Board of Social Services promulgates regulations for these adult care residences; however, guidelines do not exist that dictate staffing requirements beyond meeting the medical and physical needs of residents in nursing home facilities and adult care residences; and

WHEREAS, staffing is the key for providing satisfactory care to a vulnerable group of the Commonwealth's population; and

WHEREAS, the Secretary of Health and Human Resources in House Document 29 (1995) reviewed staffing guidelines for nursing facilities and recommended that the State Department of Health should continue to collect and study, in cooperation with industry providers and advocates, available data on nursing facility staffing; and

WHEREAS, the Congress of the United States, following 1993 hearings on the state of staffing of nursing personnel in hospitals and nursing facilities, directed the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to request a study from the Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences, to determine whether there is a need for an increase in staff in nursing homes to promote the quality of patient care and, in 1996 the Institute of Medicine recommended by the year 2000 a 24-hour presence of registered nurse coverage in nursing home facilities and that research on staffing levels of licensed practical nurses and nurse assistants to quality of care be continued; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth's Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission in 1998 recommended the development of an appropriate staffing standard to ensure the adequate supervision and care of residents of adult care residences; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of higher standards for staffing in nursing home facilities and adult care residences would lead to higher quality of care and would enable increased supervision for residents; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate Concurring, That the Joint Commission on Health Care be directed to review staffing requirements for nursing home facilities and adult care residences to ensure adequate levels of care and adequate enforcement of these standards. The Joint Commission shall determine whether staffing requirements currently in effect in the Commonwealth adequately protect the health, safety and welfare of nursing home and adult care residents. Such review shall also include the adequacy of the enforcement of such staffing guidelines, and a recommendation for enhanced staffing guidelines based on objective data resulting from the study.

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

The Joint Commission shall complete the study in time to submit all 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.

ENROLLED

HJ527ER