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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 538

Offered January 14, 1999

*Establishing a joint subcommittee to study the efficacy and appropriateness of creating residential academies for at-risk students in the Commonwealth.*

Patron—Van Yahres

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, according to the International Center for Residential Education, the concept of public boarding schools has been explored by several states to address the needs of specific student populations; and

WHEREAS, these educational alternatives may include "boot camps" focusing on student discipline and learning, boarding schools for Native American students residing in thinly-populated reservations, or summer residential education programs such as the Paterson Residential Education Program in Paterson, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, in April 1998, the Minnesota state legislature approved a \$12 million plan to create government-supported, residential academies for "trouble-prone children" in grades four through twelve; and

WHEREAS, enrollment in such academies is voluntary, and limited to those students whose parents who are unable to or cannot care for them; and

WHEREAS, supported by money previously allotted for the student's public schooling, foster care, or other social services, the Minnesota residential program provides an educational alternative that is less expensive than foster care, juvenile detention, or an adult correctional facility; and

WHEREAS, as noted by the Office of the Governor of Minnesota, these academies were designed to serve those students who "cannot function and perform in a traditional classroom setting and have demonstrated a desire to be a successful student"; and

WHEREAS, while a variety of initiatives have been designed and implemented to address the educational needs of specific student populations in the Commonwealth, such as Governor's Schools, alternative educational placements, and the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) Program, the creation of a residential academy for at-risk students may prove an effective educational opportunity for some students; and

WHEREAS, the creation of such a residential school or academy necessitates examination of a variety of educational, financial, and policy issues; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study the efficacy and appropriateness of creating residential academies for at-risk students in the Commonwealth. The joint subcommittee shall examine, among other things, residential academies and programs in other states, current initiatives addressing the educational needs of at-risk students in Virginia, residential educational programs such as summer Governor's Schools, the coordination of educational and social services for at-risk students in Virginia, and such other issues as the joint subcommittee deems appropriate.

The joint subcommittee shall consist of nine members as follows: five members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, and four members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$ 5,400.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. 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 processing 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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