

1999 SESSION

INTRODUCED

994301114

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 655

Offered January 21, 1999

Requesting the Joint Commission on Health Care to study the availability of dental care across the Commonwealth.

Patrons—Armstrong and Day; Senator: Reynolds

Referred to Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions

WHEREAS, good dental care and a healthy mouth is vital for overall good health; and

WHEREAS, many people take dental care for granted and do not realize the significant problems which result from poor care, including tooth loss, an inhibited digestive system, bacteria which can have adverse effects on other vital organs such as the heart, poor self esteem, difficulty in obtaining jobs because of illness and poor appearance, and a host of other problems; and

WHEREAS, many patients are turned away by dentists because of lack of insurance or inability to pay for their initial visits; and

WHEREAS, in many localities, especially rural ones, there are few dentists who feel that they can afford to care for Medicaid patients because of the low reimbursement rates which do not provide any profit or fall short of allowing a dentist to break even with the high overhead involved in a dental practice; and

WHEREAS, while many children are able to get dental care at the public health clinic and many of those children are Medicaid-eligible, many adults do not qualify for any services or services are not offered because of a lack of dentists; and

WHEREAS, there are free dental clinics in various spots around the state, but the drive is prohibitive for many people; and

WHEREAS, many public health clinics are actively looking for ways to fund additional dentists and dental assistants in order to treat more people, including adults; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that to provide adult dental care in many clinics, it would cost approximately \$90,000 per year for each clinic; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Commission on Health Care study the availability of dental care in the Commonwealth, especially to children of low income families. In addition, ways to improve delivery need to be evaluated as well as the fiscal impact of any program.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Joint Commission on Health Care for this study, upon request.

The Joint Commission 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.

INTRODUCED

HJ655