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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 675

Offered January 21, 1999

*Requesting the Technical Advisory Panel of the Virginia Indigent Health Care Trust Fund to examine the feasibility of establishing a pilot pharmacy program for the indigent.*

Patrons—Diamonstein, Armstrong, Baker, Bennett, Brink, Callahan, Christian, Cranwell, Davies, DeBoer, Deeds, Grayson, Hall, Hamilton, Hull, Jones, D.C., Melvin, Morgan, Phillips, Putney, Robinson, Tate, Van Landingham and Williams; Senators: Bolling, Gartlan, Lambert, Marsh, Puckett, Reynolds, Schrock, Ticer, Walker and Woods

Referred to Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions

WHEREAS, access to necessary prescription medications is critical to the prevention and treatment of a wide range of health conditions and diseases; and

WHEREAS, the cost of prescription medications has increased substantially in recent years; and

WHEREAS, the 1996 Health Access Survey of Virginians found that approximately 13 percent, or 858,000 persons, are uninsured; and

WHEREAS, the 1996 survey also found that when compared to persons with insurance coverage, the uninsured are three times more likely not to get a prescription filled because of the high cost of prescription medications; and

WHEREAS, the 1996 survey also found that 13 percent of the respondents were unable to purchase needed prescriptions due to costs; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Association of Free Clinics and the Virginia Primary Care Association report that access to prescription medications is the most critical health care need of their indigent and uninsured patients; and

WHEREAS, the Indigent Health Care Trust Fund receives moneys appropriated by the Commonwealth and contributions from certain hospitals for the purpose of reimbursing hospitals for unreimbursed inpatient and outpatient medical care provided to certain indigent persons; and

WHEREAS, the Technical Advisory Panel established in § 32.1-335 assists the Board of Medical Assistance Services in the administration of the Indigent Health Care Trust Fund; and

WHEREAS, one of the responsibilities of the Technical Advisory Panel is to establish pilot health care projects for the uninsured and administer any money voluntarily contributed or donated to the fund by private or public sources for the purpose of subsidizing pilot health care projects for the uninsured; and

WHEREAS, in a 1998 study conducted by the Virginia Department of Health regarding ways the Commonwealth can support Free Clinics and Community Health Centers, the Department found that improving access to pharmaceuticals is one of the most pressing needs of the Free Clinics and Community Health Centers in serving their respective indigent and uninsured patients; and

WHEREAS, one of the core options for supporting the Free Clinics and Community Health Centers identified by the 1998 Department of Health study was to request the Technical Advisory Panel of the Indigent Health Care Trust Fund to consider establishing a pilot pharmacy program for the indigent as a means of increasing access to pharmaceuticals for the indigent and uninsured; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Technical Advisory Panel of the Indigent Health Care Trust Fund be requested to examine the feasibility of establishing a pilot pharmacy program for the indigent as a means of improving access to prescription medications for the indigent and uninsured. The feasibility study shall include, but not be limited to, examining (i) alternative program designs, (ii) necessary administrative systems, (iii) scope, duration, location, and estimated costs of the pilot, and (iv) potential funding sources; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Technical Advisory Panel of the Indigent Health Care Trust Fund shall submit its findings and recommendations to the Board of Medical Assistance Services and the Joint Commission on Health Care by September 1, 1999, and 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

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