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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 679

Offered January 21, 1999

*Establishing a joint subcommittee to study the technology known as "personalized" or "smart" handguns, in order to review the status of present technology, its present and future accessibility and availability as well as the feasibility of developing future legislation in conformity with the finding of the study committee.*

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Patrons—Almand, Brink, Darner, Hull, Plum, Scott and Watts

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Referred to Committee on Rules

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WHEREAS, a personalized handgun is a firearm that cannot be fired by an unauthorized user, including a child or criminal; and

WHEREAS, personalized handgun technology may help to establish future statewide handgun safety standards and thereby help to prevent needless firearm deaths and injuries; and

WHEREAS, unlike a trigger lock that must be removed and replaced each time a handgun is used, a personalized handgun contains a mechanism that is incorporated into the design of the handgun; and

WHEREAS, 14 different personalized handgun technologies are under research and development and range from low-tech combination locks built into the grip of the handgun to high-tech devices that can recognize an authorized user's fingerprint; and

WHEREAS, personalized handguns are technologically feasible; and

WHEREAS, the integration of electronics into law-enforcement and consumer handguns and rifles is a natural evolution of technology which can be used for safety, performance and reliability; and

WHEREAS, national consumer initiatives and legislation have challenged consumer industries to improve the safety and design of several products, including automobiles, pharmaceutical packages and cigarette lighters; and

WHEREAS, firearms presently are the second leading cause of death among children and youth; guns presently are the leading cause of death for young African American males; and in 1995, 440 American children and teenagers were unintentionally killed by firearms in the United States; and

WHEREAS, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, 63 children and adolescents under the age of 18 were killed by gunfire in 1994, and such deaths were the second leading external or unnatural cause of death for this age group; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study the feasibility of promulgating and implementing future legislation regarding "personalized" or "smart" guns.

The joint subcommittee shall be composed of 15 members, which shall include nine legislative members and six nonlegislative members as follows: six members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; three members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; the Attorney General of the Commonwealth of Virginia; the Superintendent of the Virginia State Police; the Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Health; one representative of the handgun industry; one physician, who is board certified in the area of emergency or trauma medicine; and one local police chief. Such members not specifically named shall be appointed jointly by the Speaker of the House and the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$ 15,500.

The Division of Criminal Justice Services and 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 2001 Session of the General Assembly, and shall submit an interim report 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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