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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 383

Offered January 20, 1999

*Establishing a joint subcommittee to study special license plates.*

Patrons—Couric and Barry; Delegates: Robinson and Rollison

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, prior to 1995, issuance of new special license plates was sometimes authorized by the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles and sometimes by action of the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, during its 1995 Session, the General Assembly enacted legislation vesting the legislature with the exclusive authority to authorize new special license plates; and

WHEREAS, during the same Session, the General Assembly approved three bills authorizing 16 new special license plates; and

WHEREAS, in 1996, two bills authorized nine new special license plates, in 1997 three bills authorized 19 new special license plates, and in 1998 19 bills authorized 23 new special license plates — a total of 67 license plates in just four Sessions; and

WHEREAS, during these same four Sessions, while some proposals required more than one session to gain approval, best available data shows that only five proposed new special license plate series were rejected by the General Assembly and never affirmatively reconsidered; and

WHEREAS, although sources vary on the number of special license plate series authorized, owing in part to a lack of agreement on what constitutes a "series," most conservative estimates put the number in excess of 150; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's wide assortment of special license plates afford a means for its citizens to express themselves as individuals, allow the Commonwealth to award tokens of respect to persons with special achievements or distinctions, and provide welcome additional revenues through a form of voluntary taxation; and

WHEREAS, the rapidly growing number of special license plate designs coupled with the fact that license plates from different series sometimes display the same alpha-numeric characters, posing difficulties for law-enforcement agencies; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study special license plates and the desirability and feasibility of curbing the proliferation of new special license plate series. The joint subcommittee shall be composed of 10 members as follows: four members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections and six members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$7,500.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. Technical assistance shall be provided by the Department of Motor Vehicles. 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 the processing of 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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