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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 384

Offered January 20, 1999

*Expressing support for an initiative to study and develop alternative teacher licensure programs.*

Patrons—Couric, Bolling, Edwards, Marsh and Quayle; Delegates: Barlow, Blevins, Bryant, Dickinson, Grayson, Jones, J.C., Rhodes and Tata

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the Governor's 1999 Budget proposal, Item 129, § (Q), allocates \$50,000 in the second year of the biennium to develop a plan that affords school divisions the flexibility to hire nontraditional classroom teachers who include, but shall not be limited to, quality individuals who are college graduates or practicing professionals, but do not possess teacher certifications; and instructs the Board of Education to identify and recommend changes to applicable laws and regulations that currently prohibit school divisions from hiring such individuals; and

WHEREAS, the Commission on Access and Diversity in Higher Education, HJR 226 (1998), has found through its proceedings that qualified persons are needed in the public schools to fill positions in critical teacher shortage areas such as mathematics, foreign languages, sciences, and special educational development, and to increase the number of minority and male teachers; and

WHEREAS, state-approved, locally sponsored alternative teacher licensure programs have existed for more than a decade and have been enacted in more than 40 states; and

WHEREAS, there are many persons desiring to change careers or begin a new career who are respected professionals at the pinnacle of their vocations, and who come out of environments which foster scholarship, research, discipline, and self-control; and

WHEREAS, many retired persons and older Virginians possess needed classroom and educational skills and desire to begin second careers; and

WHEREAS, these persons may desire to pursue careers in the public schools but often do not possess the requisite educational course work which enables them to obtain teacher licenses; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has determined that it is anticipated that second-career transition programs, such as the Military-in-Transition Program located at Old Dominion University, can be instrumental in meeting the demand for teachers, and increasing the number of minority teachers by serving as an appropriate alternative route to teacher licensure; and

WHEREAS, instruction would be enriched through the sharing of diverse educational, professional and social experiences with students, classroom management may be improved, and the professional exchange between in-service and second-career teachers would be mutually beneficial to improve instructional strategies, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby express its support for an initiative to study and develop alternative teacher licensure programs as proposed in the 1999 Budget Bill, Item 129, § (Q); and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the General Assembly requests that alternative teacher licensure programs and models established in Texas and New Jersey, two states pioneering alternative licensure, be considered during the course of the study.

INTRODUCED

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