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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 160

Offered January 24, 2000

*Directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study staffing standards for sheriffs' departments.*

Patron—Forbes

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Virginia's sheriffs' offices are responsible for operating jails, securing the courthouses, and serving process; and

WHEREAS, inadequate staffing of these functions has serious implications for local governments and the Commonwealth relative to the safety and security of citizens, sheriffs and their staffs, and inmates in local correctional facilities and the efficient operation of the judicial system; and

WHEREAS, the current process for funding sheriffs' departments is a traditional budgeting and reimbursement process that has undergone little revision in the last 50 years; and

WHEREAS, although the Compensation Board uses the staffing standards set forth in the budget in addition to requests from local departments to determine staffing standards for sheriffs' departments, significant discrepancies exist between state-recognized staffing levels and actual workload in many departments; and

WHEREAS, although the 1998 General Assembly provided for an increase in staffing standards for law-enforcement deputies, this improvement benefited only those localities without police departments; and

WHEREAS, staffing standards for sheriffs' deputies involved in jail operations, court security, and process services remain unchanged; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to develop staffing standards for sheriffs' departments which more accurately reflect actual workloads and requirements and to determine the number and funding of additional positions that such revised standards may indicate are necessary; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission be directed to study staffing standards for sheriffs' departments for the provision of jail operations, courthouse security, and process services.

Technical assistance for the study shall be provided by the Virginia Sheriffs' Association. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the commission, upon request.

The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 2001 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

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