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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 100

Offered January 11, 2006

Prefiled January 10, 2006

*Directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study the criteria and policies used by the State Corporation Commission in evaluating the feasibility of undergrounding transmission lines in the Commonwealth. Report.*

Patrons—May; Senator: Mims

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, it is the duty of the State Corporation Commission to consider environmental, economic, and service reliability factors in issuing certificates of public convenience for the construction of electrical transmission lines; and

WHEREAS, the relative environmental, economic, and service reliability factors considered by the State Corporation Commission vary with respect to the proximity of the transmission lines to densely populated areas; and

WHEREAS, the long-term implications of placing overhead transmission lines near densely populated areas must be carefully evaluated; and

WHEREAS, the costs of constructing overhead transmission lines may impact tax revenue, economic development, and property values in the immediate area of the transmission lines; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the public to provide for the least costly alternative in constructing electrical transmission lines; and

WHEREAS, the process of undergrounding transmission lines may mitigate many of the detrimental effects arising from the construction and location of overhead transmission lines; and

WHEREAS, the process of undergrounding transmission lines is not widely practiced in the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission be directed to study the criteria and policies used by the State Corporation Commission in evaluating the feasibility of undergrounding transmission lines in the Commonwealth.

In conducting its study, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall examine (i) the factors considered by the State Corporation Commission in its analysis of the feasibility of installing underground electrical transmission lines; (ii) the effect on property values resulting from installing underground, as opposed to overhead, electrical transmission lines, and the feasibility of allowing surrounding property owners to agree to pay for the installation of underground lines; (iii) the construction and long-term operating costs considered by the State Corporation Commission in reviewing electrical transmission line applications; and (iv) such other issues as it deems appropriate.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission in the preparation of this report, upon request.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2006, and the Chairman shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2007 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the Commission intends to submit to the Governor and the General Assembly a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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