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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 129

Offered January 11, 2006

Prefiled January 11, 2006

*Requesting the Department of Health to study the adequacy of emergency preparedness plans for the residents of special needs facilities that serve Virginia's senior citizens. Report.*

Patron—O'Bannon

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, there are approximately 70,000 Virginians in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and adult day care programs, which are licensed by the Department of Health and Department of Social Services; and

WHEREAS, emergency situations can arise from many sources, including natural disasters, power failures, chemical and biological threats, explosions, and terrorist actions; and

WHEREAS, senior citizens and people with disabilities often have special needs, including communications difficulties, physical limitations, special equipment, and medication needs; and

WHEREAS, the federal Department of Homeland Security encourages emergency preparedness at every level; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Department of Health be requested to study the adequacy of emergency preparedness plans for the residents of special needs facilities that serve Virginia's senior citizens.

In conducting its study, the Department of Health shall assess the current statutory and licensing requirements applicable to nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and adult day care programs as the requirements relate to emergency management, and shall develop recommendations for any needed changes to these requirements. The Department shall also review any policies applicable to state agencies that are related to emergency response to nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and adult day care programs, and shall develop recommendations for changes that will enhance such emergency response.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Department of Health by the Department of Social Services, the Department for the Aging, the Department of Emergency Management, the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, and Virginia's Area Agencies on Aging. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department of Health for this study, upon request.

The Department of Health shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2006, and shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an executive summary and a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate 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 no later than the first day of the 2007 Regular Session of the General Assembly and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

HJ129