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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 608

Offered January 10, 2007

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Establishing a joint subcommittee to study the identifiable costs of new residential and commercial development in Virginia and the manner in which those costs are currently borne or would likely be borne. Report.

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Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the population of the Commonwealth is expected to increase by 1,811,725 over the next 25 years, resulting in the need for thousands of new housing units; and

WHEREAS, Virginia's economy will add thousands of new jobs during that same period; and

WHEREAS, every development pattern that would accommodate this growth has its costs and benefits; and

WHEREAS, policy should not be formulated, laws should not be enacted, and public funds should not be expended on the basis of untested assumptions about the costs and benefits of growth and development; and

WHEREAS, more study and analysis are required of the costs and benefits of alternative development patterns before policymakers make decisions about how to address growth issues in the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, insufficient consideration has been given to distance related costs of new development; and

WHEREAS, the costs associated with new development, including the capital and operating costs of transportation, water, and sewer facilities, as well as the external costs of resource protection and pollution prevention, are borne, in varying degrees, by individual citizens, by communities, and by society as a whole; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the Commonwealth and its citizens that resources be allocated to support necessary growth and development in the most efficient manner possible; and

WHEREAS, while the mechanism of the market can and does apportion many costs in an efficient manner, some costs associated with new development, including social, environmental, and quality-of-life impacts, are not readily quantified and often not covered in traditional market transactions; and

WHEREAS, distance-related costs, both capital and operating, of new development are, at times, passed on by commercial providers to the owners of properties served but usually are not taken into account by governmental providers of infrastructure and services; and

WHEREAS, the burden on taxpayers at all levels of government of providing financial support for the infrastructure that will serve new development, for police and other services required by new development, and for responding to the adverse environmental effects of such development has risen substantially in recent years, prompting consideration of alternative methods of paying for new development; and

WHEREAS, current laws and policies, including those related to taxes, fees, voluntary proffers, and other methods of financing new development and accompanying activities do not necessarily ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the allocation of costs and benefits associated with new development; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study the identifiable costs of new residential and commercial development in Virginia, including externalities, under alternative development patterns, and the manner in which those costs are currently borne or would likely be borne. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of 13 members. Members shall be appointed as follows: six members of the House of Delegates Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates; four members of the Senate Committee on Local Government to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; two members of the House of Delegates Committee on Transportation to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates; and one member of the Senate Committee on Transportation to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. The joint subcommittee shall elect a chairman and vice chairman from among its membership.

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59 Administrative staff support shall be provided by the Office of the Clerk of the House of Delegates.
60 Legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by the joint subcommittee shall be
61 provided by the Division of Legislative Services. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide
62 assistance to the joint subcommittee for this study, upon request.

63 The joint subcommittee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2007 interim and four meetings for
64 the 2008 interim, and the direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$10,000 for each year without
65 approval as set out in this resolution. Approval for unbudgeted nonmember related expenses shall
66 require the written authorization of the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk.

67 No recommendation of the joint subcommittee shall be adopted if a majority of the House members
68 or a majority of the Senate members appointed to the joint subcommittee (i) vote against the
69 recommendation and (ii) vote for the recommendation to fail notwithstanding the majority vote of the
70 joint subcommittee.

71 The joint subcommittee shall complete its meetings for the first year by November 30, 2007, and for
72 the second year by November 30, 2008, and the chairman shall submit to the Division of Legislative
73 Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first
74 day of the next Regular Session of the General Assembly for each year. Each executive summary shall
75 state whether the joint subcommittee intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor a
76 report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The
77 executive summaries and reports shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of
78 Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be
79 posted on the General Assembly's website.

80 Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint
81 Rules Committee. The Committee may approve or disapprove expenditures for this study, extend or
82 delay the period for the conduct of the study, or authorize additional meetings during the 2007 or 2008
83 interim.