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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 711

Offered January 10, 2007

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Directing the Virginia Housing Commission to study employer-assisted housing initiatives and incentives for employers to provide workforce housing for their employees. Report.

Patron—Hugo

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, in communities throughout Virginia, growing businesses often must struggle to find workers to fill jobs; and

WHEREAS, compounding this problem is the difficulty in finding affordable housing for workers; and

WHEREAS, when workers cannot find adequate housing close to their workplace they are forced to commute, which adds to congestion and increased pressure on transportation resources as well as pollution; and

WHEREAS, without affordable housing for a growing workforce, businesses in Virginia cannot recruit or retain employees and many communities that seek to expand their local economy are unable to recruit and retain employers; and

WHEREAS, employer-assisted housing (EAH) programs have been developed that enable employers to work in partnership with communities to address the affordable housing shortage, and

WHEREAS, increasingly, EAH programs are being viewed as one method to facilitate homeownership for employees and to provide other nonhousing benefits, such as reducing the disadvantages of long commutes, reducing pollution and congestion, and helping to stabilize a community's workforce; and

WHEREAS, there is a need to examine EAH initiatives and incentives for employers to provide workforce housing for their employees that are currently used by other states to assist in encouraging and improving the use of such programs and incentives in the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia Housing Commission be directed to study employer-assisted housing initiatives and incentives for employers to provide workforce housing for their employees.

In conducting its study, the Virginia Housing Commission shall examine (i) current initiatives in other states and communities that have established employer-assisted housing programs, and (ii) incentives used by other states and communities to encourage employers to provide workforce housing for their employees, including but not limited to the use of tax credits and other tax-based incentives.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Virginia Housing Commission for this study, upon request.

The Virginia Housing Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2007, 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 2008 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the Virginia Housing Commission intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor 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 and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

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