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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 113

Offered January 9, 2008

Prefiled January 8, 2008

Directing the Virginia State Crime Commission to continue its study of Juvenile Justice. Report.

Patron—Moran

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, House Joint Resolution No. 136, 2006, directed the Crime Commission to conduct a two-year study of Virginia's juvenile justice system; and

WHEREAS, in the first and second years of the study, the commission was directed to specifically study recidivism, disproportionate minority contact with the justice system, improving the quality of and access to legal counsel based on the American Bar Association recommendations, accountability in the courts, and diversion. The information gathered from the focus groups and preliminary results of the judicial survey also revealed a need to review specific mental health and truancy issues further. Other goals of the study will include determining training availability and proven practices for key contributors within the juvenile justice system and to ascertain successful reentry programs; and

WHEREAS, Crime Commission staff formed a Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court judge workgroup to assist in the development of a statewide juvenile and domestic relations judicial survey. This survey sought to obtain information concerning diversion, court appointed counsel, and disproportionate minority contact, among other issues, and received a very high response rate. Also, in the second year of the study, staff met with focus groups across the state, in conjunction with juvenile court observations. Valuable information was obtained and a need to further review the issues became apparent; and

WHEREAS, there is also a need to further analyze Title 16.1 of the Code of Virginia to determine the adequacy and effectiveness of Virginia's statutes and procedures relating to juvenile delinquency; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Virginia State Crime Commission be directed to continue its study of the juvenile justice system.

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

The Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2008, 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 2009 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the 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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