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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 128

Offered January 9, 2008

Prefiled January 8, 2008

Encouraging public institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth to enhance opportunities for international educational programs.

Patrons—Nutter and Poisson

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, international education is a crucial component of higher education in Virginia which contributes to the economy of the Commonwealth and to a diverse educational environment that enhances academic programs; and

WHEREAS, tourism and foreign trade are key sectors in Virginia's economy, making it imperative for the Commonwealth to promote mutual understanding between its citizens and those of other countries; and

WHEREAS, strong international education programs at colleges and universities offer evidence of the Commonwealth's commitment to enhancing its role as a global citizen; and

WHEREAS, Virginia currently enrolls more than 600 students from other countries as full-time, part-time, or exchange students, and it is in the best interest of the Commonwealth that institutions of higher education provide students with an opportunity to acquire intercultural skills to interact effectively within a multicultural context; and

WHEREAS, international education curricular offerings address global issues and provide in-depth understanding of other cultures that enhance the development of new knowledge and technological discoveries and innovations; and

WHEREAS, increasingly complex global trade relations require consideration of the global context that influences economic, social, political, and policy decisions; and

WHEREAS, the support of international education has become increasingly important to our national security, foreign policy, economic competitiveness, and capacity for tolerance, and learning about other cultures and languages through study, living abroad, and interacting with people of other countries promotes the free exchange of ideas and allows citizens to seek solutions to common problems, while creating lasting partnerships to address mutual concerns; and

WHEREAS, international students and scholars in the Commonwealth contribute significantly to the cultural diversity of Virginia's educational institutions, increase the educational experience of all students while making important contributions, and the Commonwealth supports the participation of Virginia's students, international students, and professors in international studies and exchange programs, and other activities that advance cultural awareness and promote mutual understanding and respect for the citizens of other countries; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That public institutions of higher education in the Commonwealth be encouraged to enhance opportunities for international educational programs. The Commonwealth's institutions of higher education are encouraged to (i) develop courses of study, academic programs, and enrichment opportunities to increase student understanding of global issues and cultural differences; (ii) promote courses in foreign languages to prepare students to seek careers in a global marketplace and enhance their understanding of other countries; (iii) provide opportunities for students in all majors to participate in programs to study abroad to enrich their academic training, intercultural perspectives, and personal development; (iv) provide opportunities for domestic and international students to interact effectively and routinely to share their views, perceptions, and experiences; and (v) develop innovative public education programs, methods, and venues to explore global issues and world cultures; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the Secretary of Education, the Executive Director of the State Council of Higher Education, and the Chancellor of the State Board for Community Colleges, requesting that they further disseminate copies of this resolution to their respective constituents so that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.

INTRODUCED

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