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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 742

Offered January 14, 2009

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study methods of reducing poverty. Report.

Patron—Hall

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Census, 2007 American Community Survey, 9.9 percent of the citizens of Virginia live below the poverty threshold set by the federal government; and

WHEREAS, 13 percent of children under 18 years of age are below the poverty level in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, there are a total of 731,123 individuals eligible for Medicaid; and

WHEREAS, there are 28,585 families who receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) for a total number of recipients of 63,382; and

WHEREAS, 33 percent of Virginia public school students were approved for free or reduced-price school lunches; and

WHEREAS, while Virginia has a low poverty rate when compared with many other states, there are areas of the Commonwealth where poverty exists at levels significantly above state averages, particularly in many rural areas and in 10 of the most heavily populated cities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study methods of reducing poverty. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of 18 members that shall consist of 10 legislative members, six citizen members, and two ex officio members. Members shall be appointed as follows: six members of the House of Delegates 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 to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules; four citizens to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates; and two citizens to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. The Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Secretary of Education or their designees shall serve ex officio with voting privileges. The joint subcommittee shall elect a chairman and vice chairman from among its membership, who shall be members of the General Assembly.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall conduct a comprehensive review of best practices and develop a strategic plan that aims to reduce the poverty rates, especially in those jurisdictions with rates above the state average.

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

The joint subcommittee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2009 interim and four meetings for the 2010 interim, and the direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$8,000 for each year without approval as set out in this resolution. Approval for unbudgeted nonmember-related expenses shall require the written authorization of the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk. If a companion joint resolution of the other chamber is agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall be required.

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

The joint subcommittee shall complete its meetings for the first year by November 30, 2009, and for the second year by November 30, 2010, 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 next Regular Session of the General Assembly for each year. Each executive summary shall state whether the joint subcommittee 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 summaries and reports 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.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint

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59 Rules Committee. The Committee may approve or disapprove expenditures for this study, extend or
60 delay the period for the conduct of the study, or authorize additional meetings during the 2009 or 2010
61 interim.