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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 325

Offered January 14, 2009

Prefiled January 13, 2009

Directing the Joint Commission on Health Care to study opportunities for early identification and preventive care of chronic diseases. Report.

Patron—Houck_____
Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, an estimated 60 percent of Americans ages 18 and older, or more than 1 in 2 adults, suffer from a diagnosable chronic disease in a given year; and

WHEREAS, chronic diseases are a leading cause of adult disability and death in the United States; and

WHEREAS, every year, hundreds of thousands of Virginians suffering from chronic disease are served by the Commonwealth's medical services system; and

WHEREAS, the cost of chronic disease treatment is borne by the Commonwealth's Medicaid program as well as by private health plans, employers, medical facilities, as well as patients and their families; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing body of evidence indicating that earlier identification of chronic diseases coupled with preventive care can halt or slow the progression of chronic diseases, thereby improving patient health and well-being while reducing medical costs; and

WHEREAS, the current public health and medical services system in Virginia and beyond may not be optimally structured to allow for early identification and preventive care in a broad-based fashion; and

WHEREAS, the demand for treatment of chronic diseases in Virginia will continue to increase as the population of older persons and others at risk continues to grow; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Commission on Health Care be directed to study opportunities for early identification and preventive care of chronic disease.

In conducting its study, the Commission shall (i) examine clinical and other studies concerning the manner in which early identification and preventive care can be utilized to halt or slow the evolution of such conditions as diabetes, hypertension, kidney disease, obesity, and pneumonia into chronic and terminal conditions, (ii) assess the means by which Virginia can address fragmentation of services across the health care delivery system and the patient's community in order to enhance early identification and preventive care for chronic disease, and (iii) estimate the fiscal impact on the Commonwealth and private payers from such strategies.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Commission by the Departments of Health and Medical Assistance Services. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission for this study, upon request.

The Joint Commission on Health Care shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2009, 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 2010 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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