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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 294

Offered January 12, 2011

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Directing the Joint Commission on Health Care to study eating disorders in the Commonwealth. Report.

Patrons—Puller; Delegate: Hope

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, an estimated 24 million Americans suffer from anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder; and

WHEREAS, the mortality rate for females between ages 15 and 24 who suffer from anorexia nervosa is 12 times higher than the mortality rate of all other causes of death for this group; and

WHEREAS, in American high schools, 30 percent of female students and 16 percent of male students suffer from disordered eating, including bingeing, vomiting, fasting, laxative and diet pill use, and compulsive exercise; and

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

WHEREAS, a growing body of evidence indicates that effective education and preventive care can significantly reduce the incidence of eating disorders; and

WHEREAS, the current medical education system, public health and health care services, and health regulations in Virginia and beyond may not be optimally structured to provide prevention, early detection, and treatment of eating disorders; and

WHEREAS, the demand for treatment of eating disorders in Virginia will continue to increase; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Commission on Health Care be directed to study eating disorders in the Commonwealth.

In conducting its study, the Joint Commission on Health Care shall (i) determine the number of incidences of diagnosed eating disorders in Virginia; (ii) assess the adequacy of training provided public school educators; (iii) evaluate the adequacy of the curriculum relating to eating disorders in Virginia's medical and nursing schools and continuing education requirements for Virginia medical professionals; (iv) determine strategies by which Virginia can increase awareness of eating disorders, including their symptoms, effects, and preventive interventions; (v) assess the cost of treatment incurred by eating disorder patients borne by the Commonwealth's Medicaid program as well as by private health plans and employers; (vi) assess issues concerning access to care for eating disorders within the Commonwealth; (vii) generate recommendations for improving education, prevention, early detection, and treatment of eating disorders in Virginia and estimate the fiscal impact on the Commonwealth and private payers for the implementation of such strategies; and (viii) consider, as the Commission may identify, such other issues related to the objectives of this study.

Technical assistance shall be provided to the Joint Commission on Health Care by the Departments of Education, Health, Medical Assistance Services, and Health Professions. 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, 2011, 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 2012 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the Joint Commission on Health Care 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.

INTRODUCED

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