

16101460D

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 65**

Offered January 13, 2016

Prefiled January 5, 2016

*Directing the Joint Commission on Health Care to study expanding the mission of the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth to focus on additional issues affecting youth health. Report.*

---

 Patron—O'Bannon
 

---



---

 Referred to Committee on Rules
 

---

WHEREAS, the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (the VFHY) was established by the General Assembly in 1999 as a political subdivision of the Commonwealth, with oversight from a board of trustees appointed by the Governor and the General Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the VFHY was established for the purpose of determining the appropriate recipients of moneys in the Virginia Tobacco Settlement Fund and causing distribution of such moneys for such purposes as financing efforts to restrict the use of tobacco products by minors; and

WHEREAS, in 2009 the General Assembly expanded the mission of the VFHY to include a focus on efforts to reduce youth obesity; and

WHEREAS, the VFHY uses a combination of programs, marketing initiatives, and research to promote healthy habits to reduce and prevent youth tobacco use and childhood obesity throughout the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the VFHY uses evidence-based practices and research to drive its work; and

WHEREAS, the VFHY has employed market research to identify youth peer crowds that are most at risk for using tobacco products and creating messages for these distinct groups has led to significant declines in smoking among youth in Virginia; and

WHEREAS, the VFHY currently partners with state agencies and stakeholders for tobacco and obesity prevention using a comprehensive approach; and

WHEREAS, since the VFHY began its work in 2001, cigarette smoking among Virginia youth has decreased by more than 60 percent among high school youth and 75 percent among middle school youth; and

WHEREAS, since the VFHY began its obesity prevention work in 2010, obesity among Virginia high school students has decreased from 28.3 percent to 26.7 percent; and

WHEREAS, the VFHY and the Department of Health administer the biennial Virginia Youth Survey (VYS), which measures a variety of factors that influence the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of youth related to health issues; and

WHEREAS, an analysis of survey data identified a number of areas of concern among Virginia youth; the VYS data indicates that high school youth are engaging in risk behaviors associated with drugs and alcohol, with 27.3 percent reporting drinking alcohol, 14.5 percent reporting binge drinking of alcohol, 17.9 percent reporting smoking marijuana, 15.9 percent reporting using prescription drugs prescribed for others, 3.9 percent reporting using heroin, 5.7 percent reporting using cocaine, and 5.0 percent reporting using methamphetamines; and

WHEREAS, bullying, both at school and electronically, is increasing to rates as high as 43.8 percent among middle school students; and

WHEREAS, about 25 percent of high school youth report being sad or hopeless daily for two or more weeks and 15 to 17 percent report having considered suicide; many of these youth have either made a plan or tried to commit suicide; and

WHEREAS, 21 percent of youth report feeling as though they have no one to talk to when they experience a problem; and

WHEREAS, building on its existing evidence-based approach, the VFHY can increase positive outcomes with these critical health issues; and

WHEREAS, by expanding its scope, the VFHY can collectively address these additional health behaviors for greater impact; and

WHEREAS, the VFHY is uniquely positioned to take on this mission, due to its expertise in youth culture and its success at cutting youth smoking rates by more than half within the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Commission on Health Care be directed to study expanding the mission of the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth to focus on additional issues affecting youth health.

In conducting its study, the Joint Commission on Health Care shall evaluate the benefits and costs of

INTRODUCED

HJ65

59 expanding the mission of the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth to include a focus on issues related  
60 to behavioral health, injury prevention, hunger, and diabetes.

61 Technical assistance shall be provided to the Joint Commission on Health Care by the Virginia  
62 Foundation for Healthy Youth. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Joint  
63 Commission on Health Care for this study, upon request.

64 The Joint Commission on Health Care shall complete its meetings for the first year by November 30,  
65 2016, and for the second year by November 30, 2017, and the chairman shall submit to the Division of  
66 Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than  
67 the first day of the next Regular Session of the General Assembly for each year. Each executive  
68 summary shall state whether the Joint Commission on Health Care intends to submit to the General  
69 Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or  
70 Senate document. The executive summaries and reports shall be submitted as provided in the procedures  
71 of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and  
72 reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.