

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 29

Establishing a joint committee of the House Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions; the House Committee on Public Safety; the Senate Committee on the Judiciary; and the Senate Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services to study staffing levels, employment conditions, and compensation at the Virginia Department of Corrections. Report.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 7, 2020

Agreed to by the Senate, March 8 2020

WHEREAS, it is the mission of the Virginia Department of Corrections to enhance public safety by providing effective programs and reentry services for the supervision of sentenced offenders in a humane, cost-effective manner, consistent with sound correctional principles and constitutional standards; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Corrections (the Department) aspires to be recognized as a model correctional agency and a proven innovative leader in the field; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth will be a safer place to live and work if the Department provides appropriate custody and supervision of, and programs and reentry practices for, offenders through its exemplary services; and

WHEREAS, the cornerstone of the Department is its employees, who embrace a common purpose and a commitment to the highest professional standards and excellence in public service; and

WHEREAS, the Department should maintain a responsible commitment to its employees and be a satisfying, rewarding, and safe place to work and grow professionally; and

WHEREAS, adequate staffing is critical to the Department's ability to fulfill its mission; and

WHEREAS, inadequate staffing levels can lead to lapses in safety and can place employees under extreme stress and at risk of other negative effects on their health; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint committee of the House Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions; the House Committee on Public Safety; the Senate Committee on the Judiciary; and the Senate Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services be established to study staffing levels, employment conditions, and compensation at the Virginia Department of Corrections. The joint committee shall have a total membership of 10 members, consisting of two members of the House Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates upon the recommendation of the Chairman of the House Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions; two members of the House Committee on Public Safety to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates upon the recommendation of the Chairman of the House Committee on Public Safety; one member of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules upon the recommendation of the Chairman of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary; one member of the Senate Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules upon the recommendation of the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Rehabilitation and Social Services; and four nonlegislative citizen members to be appointed by the Joint Committee on Rules, of whom two members shall be representatives of an association for correctional officers or employees and two members shall be former correctional officers or employees. Nonlegislative citizen members of the joint committee shall be citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Unless otherwise approved in writing by the chairman of the joint committee and the Clerk of the House of Delegates, nonlegislative citizen members shall only be reimbursed for travel originating and ending within the Commonwealth of Virginia for the purpose of attending meetings. The joint committee shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among its membership.

In conducting its study, the joint committee shall study staffing levels, rates of staff turnover, employment conditions, employee health and safety, and employee compensation at the Department.

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 committee shall be provided by the Division of Legislative Services. Technical assistance shall be provided by the Department. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint committee for this study, upon request.

The joint committee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2020 interim. The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$14,200 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 committee and the Clerk of the House of Delegates. If a companion joint resolution of the other chamber is agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall be required.

ENROLLED

HJ29ER

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

The joint committee shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2020, and the chairman shall submit an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2021 Regular Session of the General Assembly to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems. The executive summary shall state whether the joint committee 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 the 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.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may approve or disapprove expenditures for this study, extend or delay the period for the conduct of the study, or authorize additional meetings during the 2020 interim.