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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 293

Offered January 13, 2021

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Directing the Joint Commission on Health Care to study available data regarding assisted living and auxiliary grants and develop a blueprint for implementing recommendations that will allow the Commonwealth to provide a more realistic system of addressing housing and care needs. Report.

Patron—Spruill

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, funding for auxiliary grants, which are income supplements for individuals who receive Supplemental Security Income and certain other aged, blind, or disabled individuals who reside in a licensed assisted living facility or an approved adult foster care home, is currently so low that the number of auxiliary grant beds available in such facilities has declined steadily in the last decade, leaving individuals homeless; and

WHEREAS, the current requirement that localities pay 20 percent of auxiliary grants is possibly outdated, as many localities have few, if any, tools to deal with auxiliary grant beds being built, leaving many individuals homeless who might otherwise have had beds available through auxiliary grants; and

WHEREAS, Medicaid can be used to pay some of the costs of assisted living other than room and board, waivers are successfully being utilized in other states, and third-party payer contributions could alleviate stress on the state budget; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth has some of the most rigorous standards for nursing home eligibility in the nation, which means that Virginians in assisted living facilities would be eligible for nursing home care through Medicaid in most other states; and

WHEREAS, despite several reviews and legislative studies by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission in the last decade and a half, many of the recommendations of such studies have not been pursued, and the Joint Commission on Health Care is well-versed in addressing the needs of older Virginians and Virginians with special needs; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the Joint Commission on Health Care be directed to study available data regarding assisted living and auxiliary grants and develop a blueprint for implementing recommendations that will allow the Commonwealth to provide a more realistic system of addressing housing and care needs.

In conducting its study, the Joint Commission on Health Care shall review available data regarding assisted living and auxiliary grants and develop a blueprint for implementing recommendations that will allow the Commonwealth to provide a more realistic system of addressing housing and care needs for those Virginians in need of home and community-based services and supports and assisted living and nursing home care. Such review and blueprint shall be made available to the Governor for use in his preparation of budget in the fall of 2021.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Joint Commission on Health Care for this study, upon request.

The Joint Commission on Health Care shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2021, 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 2022 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.

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