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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 535

Offered January 11, 2023

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Directing the Joint Commission on Technology and Science to study the extreme differences in life expectancy in Virginia and potential technological approaches to monitoring and resolving these differences. Report.

Patrons—Hayes, Adams, D.M., Bennett-Parker, Clark, Guzman, Helmer, Jenkins, Kory, Maldonado, Price, Rasoul, Shin, Simon and Subramanyam; Senator: Boysko

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, life expectancy in the Commonwealth varies by as much as forty years among populations of different regions; and

WHEREAS, more than half of the counties in the Commonwealth have life expectancies in the lower two quintiles (56.9 to 75.1 years and 75.2 to 77.5 years) and most of such counties are in rural and agricultural areas; and

WHEREAS, other states are using data and technology tools to improve understanding of these differences in order to develop better approaches to improving life outcomes; and

WHEREAS, current data used to inform policy solutions is liable to be accidentally or intentionally misinterpreted; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Commission on Technology and Science (Commission) be directed to study the extreme differences in life expectancy in Virginia and potential technological approaches to monitoring and resolving these differences.

In conducting its study, the Commission shall examine (i) current and alternative data sources to understand life expectancy variation, drivers of these differences, and technological solutions for monitoring efforts to reduce variation; (ii) technological and policy solutions for improving life outcomes in rural, agricultural, and coastal areas that are most affected; (iii) alternative actions available to remedy or mitigate negative impacts on life expectancy and their expected cost; (iv) the degree of certainty to which each of these impacts on life expectancy and alternative actions may reliably be known; and (v) the technical resources available, either in-state or otherwise, to effect such alternative actions and improve knowledge of their effectiveness and cost.

The Office of the Clerk of the House of Delegates shall provide administrative staff support. The Division of Legislative Services shall provide legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by the Commission. Technical assistance shall be provided to the Commission by the Secretary of Health and Human Resources. The Commission shall accept any scientific and technical assistance provided by the nonpartisan, volunteer Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Commission for this study, upon request.

The Commission shall complete its meetings by November 1, 2023, 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 2024 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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