

1995 SESSION

INTRODUCED

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 491

Offered January 19, 1995

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study and make recommendations concerning the need to encourage tree preservation as the primary means of satisfying tree coverage requirements.

Patrons—Callahan and Scott; Senator: Gartlan

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, the benefits of tree coverage for the enhancement of the quality of life, human health and property are many; and

WHEREAS, in particular, trees moderate the effects of sun and wind, act to moderate temperature changes, provide shade and provide a haven for animals and birds which, in turn, assist in the control of insects; and

WHEREAS, trees also decrease storm water runoff through canopy interception and root zone uptake and assist in the stabilization of soil and prevention of erosion; and

WHEREAS, trees provide buffers and screens against noise and air pollution, generally contribute to the intake of carbon dioxide and the release of oxygen in our atmosphere and filter out pollutants and, thereby, become a vital tool in helping to control the buildup of pollutants in the atmosphere which is of particular importance in the highly developed areas of the State; and

WHEREAS, trees are important psychological, sociological and aesthetic counterpoints to the man-made urban setting and tend to conserve and increase property values; and

WHEREAS, achieving tree cover through the preservation of mature trees rather than cutting existing trees and replacing them with smaller trees provides these benefits immediately and with minimal disruption to the ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, while the existing tree replacement legislation is necessary to insure that a percentage of tree cover is maintained in the Commonwealth where development is taking place by requiring the planting and replacement of trees, it does not specifically encourage the preservation of existing trees which can provide more immediate coverage and effect; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee of the House of Delegates and the Senate be established to study the need for enhancing the statutory authority for tree preservation so as to promote, through a combination of appropriate incentives and disincentives, such preservation as the primary means of attaining tree cover on developing sites. The subcommittee shall consist of seven members; four shall be members of the House of Delegates to be appointed by the Speaker, and three shall be members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections.

The direct costs of the study shall not exceed \$4,200.

The Division of Legislative Services shall provide staff support for the study. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint subcommittee upon request.

The joint subcommittee shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1996 Session of the General Assembly as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the study.

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