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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 252

Offered January 22, 1996

*Establishing the High Speed Rail Service Commission.*

Patrons—Robinson, Clement, Darner and Puller; Senators: Barry, Marsh, Reasor and Waddell

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, there have been studies conducted by the General Assembly on various aspects of the high speed rail system between Richmond and Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, other parts of the Commonwealth want to determine the usefulness of high speed rail in their locations; and

WHEREAS, the benefits of a national intermodal transportation system are enormous, offering the promise of (i) lowering overall costs by allowing each mode to be used for the portion of the trip for which it is best suited; (ii) increasing economic productivity and efficiency, thereby enhancing the nation's global competitiveness; (iii) reducing the congestion and burden on overstressed infrastructure investments; (iv) improving mobility for elderly, disabled, isolated, and economically disadvantaged persons; (v) generating higher returns from public and private infrastructure investments; and (vi) reducing energy consumption and contributing to improved air quality and environmental conditions; and

WHEREAS, high speed rail will be a critical component of the Commonwealth's system of intermodal transportation; and

WHEREAS, there is currently a mix of private and public entities involved in the financing, management and maintenance of Virginia's rail system; and

WHEREAS, coordinated planning and evaluation will contribute to the most efficient and effective use of Virginia's transportation resources; and

WHEREAS, increased rail ridership offers the opportunity for communities with rail stations to expand pleasant, economically viable residential or commercial facilities near those stations, resulting in environmental benefits to the affected communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the High Speed Rail Service Commission be established. The Commission shall make recommendations necessary to assure the presence of high speed rail service in Virginia.

During its deliberations the Commission shall address the following questions:

1. Where in the Commonwealth will high speed rail be most effective and efficient, given the goals of an intermodal system?

2. What are the roles of the various private and public entities now involved in the planning and delivery of high speed rail service?

3. What timetable should be used for the development of the high speed rail system?

4. How should system construction and expansion be financed?

The Commission shall consider other aspects of the creation of a high speed rail system for the Commonwealth as they find necessary.

The Commission will build on preliminary work done by the Department of Transportation and several private studies and report its findings to the 1997 Session of the General Assembly.

The Commission shall consist of sixteen members appointed as follows: one member of the House of Delegates, the Chairman of the House Transportation Committee, one member of the Board of Transportation Safety, one representative of the Virginia Railway Express, and one citizen of the Commonwealth, all appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates; and one member of the Senate, one representative of commercial rail lines, the Chairman of Senate Transportation Committee, and one citizen of the Commonwealth, all appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections. The Lieutenant Governor, the Secretary of Commerce and Trade, the Secretary of Transportation, the Chairman of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, the Chairman of the House Finance Committee and a member of the Senate Finance Committee, selected by its Co-Chairmen, and the Executive Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transit shall also be voting members of the Commission.

The Commission shall be staffed by the Division of Legislative Services, assisted by the staffs of the House and Senate Finance Committees.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$ 6,750.

The Commission shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1997 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

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**60** Rules Committee. The Committee may withhold expenditures or delay the period for the conduct of the  
**61** study.