

961899432

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 252
AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
 (Proposed by the House Committee on Rules
 on February 6, 1996)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Robinson)

Requesting the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to study the high speed rail service.

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 thereby 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 Department of Rail and Public Transportation be requested to study the high speed rail service. The Department shall make recommendations necessary to assure the presence of high speed rail service in Virginia.

During its deliberations, the Department 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 Department shall consider other aspects of the creation of a high speed rail system for the Commonwealth as it finds necessary. The Department shall build on preliminary work completed by the Department of Transportation and several private studies.

All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Department, upon request.

The Department 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.