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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 219

Offered January 9, 1997

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study changing the official state song of the Commonwealth.

Patrons—Newman and Lucas

Referred to the Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia" was designated as the official song of the Commonwealth of Virginia by House Joint Resolution No. 10 in 1940; and

WHEREAS, recurring controversies over the song's use of racially sensitive words and lack of references to Virginia's natural scenic beauty and rich history have diminished the song's prominence; and

WHEREAS, "Carry Me Back to Old Virginia" has not been taught or sung in the public schools of Virginia for 20 years; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth needs an official song that can be sung on all occasions with pride and affection; and

WHEREAS, the historical significance of "Carry Me Back to Virginia" can still be recognized by designating it as Virginia's official state song emeritus;

WHEREAS, numerous proposals to adopt a new state song have been considered by the General Assembly, but none have received resounding support; and

WHEREAS, 10 years have passed since a joint subcommittee held hearings to solicit suggestions from the citizens of the Commonwealth on a new state song; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study changing the official state song. The joint subcommittee shall be composed of 11 members, which shall include six legislative members and five nonlegislative citizen members as follows: two members of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; four members of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker; two citizens of the Commonwealth, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; two citizen members of the Commonwealth, to be appointed by the Speaker; and Virginia's Poet Laureate. Citizen members should have some particular knowledge or expertise in music, literature, or Virginia history.

The direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$9,250.

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 determine the three best alternative songs for the state song and shall complete its work in time to submit its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the 1998 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.

INTRODUCED

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