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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 145**

House Amendments in [ ] — February 17, 1998

*Requesting the Governor, Attorney General and Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to develop a plan for protecting Virginia's tobacco farmers.*

Patron—Phillips

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, tobacco is Virginia's top cash crop, with receipts of \$188 million in 1996; and  
 WHEREAS, many Southside [ and Southwest ] Virginia communities are economically dependent on tobacco farming; and  
 WHEREAS, over 27,000 Virginians are employed in the tobacco industry, and as many as 120,457 jobs are supported by tobacco-related activities; and  
 WHEREAS, forty states have sued the tobacco industry seeking damages for smoking-related health costs, and the parties to these lawsuits are negotiating a national settlement that would require Congressional approval; and  
 WHEREAS, any such national settlement, if approved, is expected to result in substantial changes in the tobacco industry and Virginia's tobacco economy; and  
 WHEREAS, the interests of tobacco growers may not be adequately addressed by a proposed national settlement; now, therefore, be it  
 RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Governor, Attorney General and Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services be urged to develop a plan for protecting Virginia's tobacco farmers. The plan should include recommendations for protections that should be incorporated in the national tobacco settlement and ways that Virginia should respond to the settlement to protect tobacco farmers; and, be it  
 RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the Governor, the Attorney General, and the Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services in order that they may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly in this matter.

ENGROSSED

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