

**LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**

.....

**INTERIM REPORT OF THE  
COMMISSION ON THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**

**To**

**THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



**House Document No. 32**

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
Department of Purchases and Supply**

**Richmond**

**1975**

**MEMBERS OF COMMISSION**

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**Denton Roberts**  
**Constance D. Sprouse**

**LEGISLATIVE PROCESS**  
**Interim Report of the**  
**Commission on the Legislative Process**  
**to**  
**The General Assembly of Virginia**  
**Richmond, Virginia**  
**January, 1975**

To: The General Assembly of Virginia

The Commission on the Legislative Process made a comprehensive report to the 1974 Session requesting the approval of five recommendations. Staffing, facilities, computer technology, legislative procedures and related matters were discussed. Some of the recommendations were approved by the General Assembly but other matters remained to be considered in greater detail. House Joint Resolution No. 39 of the 1974 Session continued the Commission in order that it might continue its review of the legislative process. Although the resolution directs the Commission to report January 1, 1976, the Commission finds the need to make certain recommendations that require the action of the Assembly this session.

The Commission makes this interim report pursuant to the directives of House Joint Resolution No. 39, which is as follows:

**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 39**

**Continuing the Commission on the Legislative Process.**

Whereas, the Commission on the Legislative Process has initiated a comprehensive review of facilities staff and procedures designed to facilitate efficient operations of the General Assembly, and particularly has studied needs and space requirements to accommodate a more efficient legislature to meet the expanding needs of Virginia into the twenty-first century; and

Whereas, the constant development of new techniques and innovative procedures, the use of which will continue to improve the effectiveness of the work of the General Assembly, requires constant study and review, with the view to adopting such techniques and procedures to the benefit of the Commonwealth; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring,

That the Commission on the Legislative Process be continued. The Commission shall be composed of twelve members appointed as follows: the Speaker of the House of Delegates and six persons appointed by him; the President of the Senate, the President pro tempore and three Senators appointed by the Committee on Privileges and Elections of the Senate. The Commission shall be composed, insofar as it may be practicable, of the same persons who were appointed to the Commission in nineteen hundred seventy-three, provided that all appointive members are incumbent members of the General Assembly. The members so appointed shall elect from their membership a chairman and a vice-chairman.

The Commission shall continue its study of the Legislative Process in Virginia. The Commission shall consider, but shall not be limited to: (1) facilities; (2) staff assistance for the General Assembly; (3) the continued development of the use of computer technology; (4) the use by the legislature of the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission; and (5) procedures designed to improve the processing of legislation.

Resolved further, That the Commission is also directed to make a study of the feasibility of establishing standard procedures for certain legislative action, including:

(1) Establishment of a standard date to limit introduction of bills and joint resolutions in both sixty and thirty day sessions;

(2) Establishment of a standard date to limit consideration of bills and joint resolutions by the house of origin in both sixty and thirty day sessions;

(3) Advisability of a short recess of the General Assembly after the date set to limit introduction of bills and resolutions to allow the public and the members of the General Assembly to familiarize themselves with the issues confronting them; and the advisability of a recess to permit the House Appropriations Committee and Senate Finance Committee to conduct public hearings on the budget; and the advisability of a recess to permit legislation to be checked before final recess and the consideration of vetoes.

Members of the Commission shall receive the compensation provided by law for members of legislative committees and be reimbursed for their actual expenses, which shall be paid from the contingent fund of the General Assembly. In addition, the Commission is hereby authorized to expend a sum sufficient, not to exceed fifty thousand dollars, from the contingent fund of the General Assembly, to defray the cost of conducting the study, which cost shall include the employment of such personnel as it deems advisable.

The Commission shall complete its study and report its findings and recommendations to the members of the General Assembly not later than January one, nineteen hundred seventy-six. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall assist the Commission in its study upon request. The Director of the Division of Legislative Services shall serve as secretary to the Commission.

The study directive specified that the membership of the Commission should remain unchanged to the extent practicable. Accordingly, the Speaker of the House of Delegates, John Warren Cooke, President of the Senate, John N. Dalton, and President pro tempore of the Senate, Edward E. Willey, were designated by resolution to serve on the Commission. Pursuant to the appointive power delegated by the resolution, the Speaker appointed the following members of the House of Delegates to serve on the Commission: Philip B. Morris of Richmond; Robert R. Gwathmey, III of Hanover; Lewis A. McMurrin, Jr. of Newport News; Ford C. Quillen of Gate City; Vincent F. Callahan, Jr. of McLean, and James M. Thomson of Alexandria. The Committee on Privileges and Elections of the Senate appointed Hunter B. Andrews of Hampton, Joseph V. Gartlan, Jr. of Fairfax and William F. Parkerson, Jr. of Henrico. Mr. Cooke was reelected to serve as Chairman of the Commission and Lieutenant Governor Dalton was elected Vice Chairman. John A. Banks, Jr., Director of the Division of Legislative Services, served as Secretary to the Commission in compliance with the terms of the study directive.

The Commission received staff assistance from several agencies serving the General Assembly. Louise O. Lucas, Clerk of the Senate; Joseph H. Holleman, Jr., Clerk of the House of Delegates; J. T. Shropshire, Deputy Clerk of the Senate; H. Bryan Mitchell, Administrative Assistant to the Speaker of the House of Delegates; Constance D. Sprouse, Legislative Research Associate of the Division of Legislative Services; Denton Roberts, Staff Attorney of the Division of Legislative Services and Laurens Sartoris, Senior Attorney of the Division of Legislative Services, assisted the Commission in its work.

After assessing the nature of the responsibilities of the Commission, it was determined that the work of the Commission could best be carried forth in subcommittees delegated with individual areas of responsibility: facilities, staffing, procedures, computer technology, and Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission Subcommittees. The Subcommittees were thereafter constituted in accordance with the appointments made by the Chairman, in consultation with the Vice Chairman, as follows:

From the Senate

From the House

**FACILITIES**

Hunter B. Andrews

Lewis A. McMurrin, Jr.  
(Chairman)

Edward E. Willey

James B. Thomson  
Philip B. Morris

**STAFFING**

William F. Parkerson, Jr.

Philip B. Morris  
(Chairman)  
Robert R. Gwathmey, III

**COMPUTER**

Joseph V. Gartlan, Jr.  
(Chairman)

Vincent F. Callahan, Jr.  
Ford C. Quillen

## **JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT AND REVIEW**

Edward E. Willey  
(Chairman)  
William F. Parkerson, Jr.

Vincent F. Callahan, Jr.  
Lewis A. McMurrin, Jr.  
Ford C. Quillen

### **PROCEDURES**

Hunter B. Andrews  
Joseph V. Gartlan, Jr.

James M. Thomson  
(Chairman)  
Robert R. Gwathmey, III

The Subcommittees are conducting independent investigations of the matters before them with the assistance of the staff. Of special note is the work of the Division of Engineering and Buildings under the direction of Douglas Hamner which rendered special assistance to the Facilities Subcommittee.

The following recommendations are based on the interim subcommittee reports which were presented to the full Commission, modified and adopted as they are presented herein.

### **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

(1) The Life of Virginia Insurance Building should be renovated to provide legislative offices, committee rooms and staff quarters. However, the consensus of the Commission is that review of the possibility of acquisition or construction of facilities suitable for housing the entire legislative process on a long-term basis continue.

(2) Centralized staffing for standing committees should be provided from the Division of Legislative Services to commence with the 1976 Session.

(3) It has been determined that the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission has the necessary statutory guidance to perform its duties. The Legislative Process Commission recommends the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission periodically remind legislators that it is receptive to their suggestions concerning possible areas of study.

(4) The legislative computer operations have developed extensively to provide the General Assembly with the modern tools it needs to conduct business in the most efficient manner possible. Development of such operations should continue in order to provide maximum usage for the conduct of legislative business.

(5) The Commission is currently engaged in an in-depth study of the proliferation of study commissions, Virginia Advisory Legislative Council studies and agency studies. Until the Commission reports its finding, it urges the joint Rules Committees of the House of Delegates and Senate to carefully review all requests for studies so that excessive efforts and expense may be avoided.

## DISCUSSION

1. THE LIFE OF VIRGINIA INSURANCE BUILDING SHOULD BE RENOVATED TO PROVIDE LEGISLATIVE OFFICES, COMMITTEE ROOMS AND STAFF QUARTERS. HOWEVER, THE CONSENSUS OF THE COMMISSION IS THAT REVIEW OF THE POSSIBILITY OF ACQUISITION OR CONSTRUCTION OF FACILITIES FOR HOUSING THE ENTIRE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS ON A LONG-TERM BASIS CONTINUE.

Several immediate space needs regarding the legislative process are recognized. First, additional committee rooms and joint hearing rooms are necessary to better accommodate the committee system and the public. Second, the present fragmented situation with regard to the Division of Legislative Services should be remedied to maximize the efficiency of those services provided to the General Assembly. Third, the legislators' offices should be of sufficient size to provide space for legislators to meet constituents, confer with colleagues, and house legislative aides. Fourth, space for secretarial services should be in close proximity to offices. Fifth, conference rooms should also be provided in close proximity to these offices for consultations among members and with groups of constituents. Sixth, the use of the existing chambers, if at all practicable, should be continued and all of the above facilities should be in as close proximity as possible.

The following locations among others have been explored for possible use by the legislature: (1) Ninth Street Office Building; (2) Finance Building; (3) Elko Tract; (4) Blanton Building; (5) Memorial Hospital; and (6) Life of Virginia Insurance Building. All of the above locations are owned by the State and, with the exception of the Finance Building, the Elko Tract and the Memorial Hospital site, would involve the lesser costs of renovation as opposed to the costs of construction.

Based on the above space needs, proposed locations 1 through 5 were rejected for the following reasons:

(1) Ninth Street Office Building - The proposal to move agencies housed in this facility into the Eighth Street Office Building in order to house legislative offices was discussed. Such proposal would result in costly, extensive renovations which would serve only to shorten the distance between the legislators and the chambers a mere 240 linear feet. The arrangement of rooms in the Eighth Street Office Building does not lend itself to office space for the executive functions which have been adequately housed in the Ninth Street facility.

(2) Finance Building - Demolition of this facility for the construction of a legislative office building appears to have severe implications. The facility was not considered for renovation since it does not have sufficient floor space. There is also a shortage of State-owned office space to accommodate those agencies now housed in the building. In light of the current economic situation, it

is apparent that the Commonwealth does not have sufficient funds to rent office space for all the general fund agencies housed in this facility. Even if funds became available for rental fees, no buildings in close proximity to the executive agency complex could provide the necessary space.

(3) Elko Tract - This 2,400 acre tract of land owned by the State is located near Richard E. Byrd International Airport. This remote site would require the construction of a complete legislative complex with new chambers, thereby relegating the existing Capitol to museum status which the Commission finds undesirable at this time. Additionally, utility and access problems restrict the immediate availability of the land. The present sewerage system would require renovations estimated to cost between \$750,000.00 and \$1,000,000.00 and Henrico County is unsure of the date county service could be provided. The existing water well would not support such a complex and the county does not expect to have water service in this area for two or three years. Although the proposed Interstate 295 will render the tract easily accessible, construction is not expected to begin until 1978 or 1979.

(4) Blanton Building - Even if the Blanton Building should become available, the Commission is of the opinion the site would remove legislative offices too far from the Capitol and the legislative process.

(5) Memorial Hospital Site - This site would involve costly demolition expenses and the construction of a new facility. Also, the site is extremely inconvenient to the Capitol.

Proposals in past reports of the Commission, including the construction of facilities in the south section of the Capitol grounds and the Federal Reserve Building also were reviewed. Neither proposal merits further consideration since negative factors associated with the sites still exist.

The Legislative Process Commission recommends that the General Assembly authorize the joint Rules Committees of the House of Delegates and the Senate to obtain the services of architects to develop plans for renovating a portion of the Life of Virginia Insurance Building for use by the General Assembly. The Commission is of the opinion that the site is desirable due to its location and availability. It is anticipated to be vacated beginning October, 1975.

Preliminary review of the space in this facility indicates it could accommodate offices for members, legislative aides, rooms for secretarial services, conference rooms, the Division of Legislative Services, additional committee rooms, and joint hearing rooms. The present arrangement of floor space appears conducive to renovation which is an important economic consideration. The location of the facility lends itself to easy access for the members to the chambers and for the public to committee rooms housed therein. Ample parking space is available in connection with the City Hall complex, the Coliseum and the downtown public shopping area.



The old and new parts of the building contain approximately 226,500 square feet of net usable space. Four alternative plans for the use of about 42% of this space have been prepared by the Division of Engineering and Buildings. These plans would provide for an increase of 240% of the present office and service space. Two additional committee rooms for each house approximately the size of House Room 4 and a larger joint hearing room for each house would be provided. The Division of Legislative Services could be located in this building with an additional 3,000 square feet available. The committee rooms and the Division could be located on the first floor and in the basement of the old building. The basement has windows on Capitol Street and both it and the first floor have easy public access on both Broad and Capitol Streets. There is also substantial additional storage area in the basement for the Division and the Clerks of the House and the Senate. Consolidation of the Division in one physical area would greatly increase efficiency.

Presently, the sixth floor of the old part of the building provides executive and employee dining facilities which could be used by legislators and State employees during the session and by State employees during the interim.

The Life of Virginia Insurance Building has much to offer the General Assembly in terms of space and location. Therefore, the Commission feels that this facility should be developed beginning in October, 1975 for use by the General Assembly in the 1977 Session. The present Eighth Street Office Building space could be converted to other uses after the 1976 Session.

The preliminary estimates of space requirements for the General Assembly indicate that more than half of the old and new portions of the Life of Virginia Insurance Building would be available for use for other governmental functions. The cost of the General Assembly modifications is estimated at \$3,750,000.

The need for additional space has been recognized since the early 1950's. As the demands upon the General Assembly have increased, the space requirements have become greater. The stated objective of the Commission has been to provide legislative facilities adequate to meet the needs of the future. Renovation of the Life of Virginia Insurance Building will meet the immediate and critical space needs of the legislature. However, the Commission expresses reservations that this space will serve the long-term needs of the future. Therefore, the Commission will continue to pursue its goal of reviewing possible methods for providing long-term facilities for the General Assembly.

The Commission recommends that the necessary resolution be adopted by the General Assembly authorizing the joint Rules Committees to proceed (see Appendix 1).

2. **CENTRALIZED STAFFING FOR STANDING COMMITTEES SHOULD BE PROVIDED FROM THE DIVISION OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES TO COMMENCE WITH THE 1976 SESSION.**

If the Virginia General Assembly is to remain a body of citizen-legislators, the demands on the individual member's time must be lessened. Our belief is that adequate staff assistance at the committee level can lessen these demands and better assist the members in performing their duties.

Currently, standing committees can draw on two sources for staff assistance: outside counsel and the Division of Legislative Services.

Outside counsel must initially spend much of their time orienting themselves to the legislative process and the needs of particular committees. There is a lack of continuity since part-time counsel often serve for only one or two sessions and are generally unavailable during the interim.

The staff of the Division of Legislative Services is now organized into areas of specialization, i.e., Commerce and Natural Resources; Courts of Justice and Crime; Elections and Political Subdivisions; Taxation and Finance; Health, Education, and Social Services; and Transportation and General Laws. Despite an effort to structure the staff to conform with the standing committee structure, the Division's ability to serve standing committees is severely limited by its responsibilities to the Virginia Advisory Legislative Council, the Code Commission, and special study commissions.

A more coordinated approach toward staffing should be developed. Such coordination can and should be achieved without creating a new mechanism or department. We recommend phasing out part-time committee counsel in favor of a full-time staff furnished centrally through the Division of Legislative Services.

This approach is preferred by the Commission for several reasons. It would: (1) maximize coordination between House and Senate committees; (2) provide continuity of staff between and during sessions; (3) reduce administrative costs; and (4) provide centralized information access to the Council of State Governments, the Interstate Exchange Program and other legislative research centers.

Additionally, full-time committee staff would assist legislators in: (1) gathering, assessing, and sorting needed information on short notice for small projects; (2) compiling and presenting expert knowledge on past and present legislative and executive proposals in Virginia, in other states, and at the federal level; and (3) maintaining expertise in legislative law in order to strengthen the technical aspects of the committee's work. In short, the standing committees should have available to them the resources necessary to provide in-depth research on the issues facing them.

The Commission projects that an initial increase in the Division's staff of two attorneys and three research associates would enable the entire staff to begin serving the standing committees during sessions as well as during the interim.

This proposal is not calculated to increase expenditures to any great degree. During the 1974 Session the Senate spent \$20,750.00 on part-time committee counsel and the House spent \$18,340.85 for a total of \$39,090.85. The recommended increase in the Division's staff is estimated to cost \$58,766.00. One-time expenditures for equipment would amount to \$2,580.00. (Secretarial capabilities already exist within the Division to support these employees.) The Commission believes the increased expenditure is justified by the benefits to be derived. The Commission recognizes that, as demands upon the legislators—and consequently on the staff—increase in the future, additional staff will probably be necessary to maintain efficient service.

In summary, the Commission believes that the interests of the General Assembly and the people of Virginia might be better served by placing increased responsibilities on the Assembly's standing committees. So that those committees could effectively manage that increased burden, the Commission recommends that they be provided with a permanent staff through the Division of Legislative Services. The necessary resolution should be adopted by the General Assembly this session so that the Division would be capable of rendering these services at the 1976 Session (see Appendix 2).

3. IT HAS BEEN DETERMINED THAT THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT AND REVIEW COMMISSION HAS THE NECESSARY STATUTORY GUIDANCE TO PERFORM ITS DUTIES. THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS COMMISSION RECOMMENDS THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT AND REVIEW COMMISSION TO PERIODICALLY REMIND LEGISLATORS THAT IT IS RECEPTIVE TO THEIR SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING POSSIBLE AREAS OF STUDY.

In creating the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission, the General Assembly recognized the need for its own source of information on the efficiency and effectiveness of programs carried out by State agencies. In order to satisfy this need the Commission has hired an executive director who has assembled a capable staff. The staff has begun its investigations in accordance with the wishes of the Commission.

The powers and duties of the Commission as set forth in § 30-58 are both necessary and proper for the execution of its functions as an independent source of information for the General Assembly. Virginia's statutes provide adequate guidance for the Commission and its staff to conduct their initial investigations. Once the Commission has made several studies, and the effects of these studies on State programs have been evaluated, a review of the Commission's work may be appropriate. Such a review now is premature. Therefore, no changes in the statutory provisions concerning the Commission should be made at this time.

The Legislative Process Commission recommends that the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission periodically remind members of the General Assembly that it is receptive to suggestions from Assembly members concerning possible areas of study. The Commission has distributed one such notice and the practice should

be continued on a regular basis.

4. THE LEGISLATIVE COMPUTER OPERATIONS HAVE DEVELOPED EXTENSIVELY TO PROVIDE THE LEGISLATURE WITH THE MODERN TOOLS IT NEEDS TO CONDUCT BUSINESS IN THE MOST EFFICIENT MANNER POSSIBLE. DEVELOPMENT OF SUCH OPERATIONS SHOULD CONTINUE IN ORDER TO PROVIDE MAXIMUM USAGE FOR THE CONDUCT OF LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS.

So that the General Assembly and other persons concerned with the legislative process better understand the legislative computer operations, the Commission submits the following history and explanation of applications which benefit the General Assembly in the conduct of its business.

A. Text Processing System (Qwik-Draft)

The following applications of the Text Processing System supported the 1974 General Assembly Session and will serve future sessions.

1. Bill Drafting: Drafted bills and resolutions are keyed via terminals and stored in computer files for subsequent retrieval for corrections, amendments, and printing.
2. Bill Conversion: The drafted version of a bill or resolution is retrieved from auxiliary computer storage and prepared for printing via computerized photocomposition methods.
3. Bill Enrolling: Bills passing both houses are recalled from auxiliary storage, amendments applied and stored back in computer storage in final form.
4. Bill Summaries: All bills introduced are summarized and keyed into computer storage and then recalled for printing by photocomposition.

Additional applications during the 1975 Session include:

1. House & Senate Calendar Preparation: The calendar will be keyed daily, stored in computer storage, and then printed by photocomposition.
2. Bill Engrossing: Bills and resolutions that pass the house of origin will be retrieved from computer storage, amendments applied, and printing accomplished by photocomposition.
3. Documents: House and Senate documents are being keyed via computer terminals into computer storage and subsequently printed.
4. Journals: House and Senate Journals will be keyed via the terminals and periodically printed during the session and printed in entirety after conclusion of the session.

Other enhancements to the Text Processing System are as follows:

1. Range Retrieval: The keying operator can now retrieve a range of sections from the Code for insertion in a bill being drafted. Heretofore only one section at a time could be retrieved.
2. Backup: Two of the Division of Automated Data Processing's Computer Resource Centers can now support the Qwik-Draft System. If one center experiences a prolonged failure then the other center can start supporting the system.
3. Utilities: A utility computer program has been developed to extract copies of bills, calendars, etc. for photocomposition. In the past the entire Qwik-Draft System had to be shut down creating significant unproductive periods of time.
4. Staff Increase: Four computer terminal operators have been added to the staff to help accomplish the additional workload of the new applications.

#### B. Bill Status On-Line System

The same capability as before exists except for two major enhancements as follows: (a) A new inquiry to facilitate entry of assigned bill numbers, patron's names and committee assignments for the printing of introduced bills into the system is operational (this should save one whole keying operation), and (b) a vote on committee actions is now shown.

A conversion computer program has been developed to facilitate changes from one session to the next. Heretofore changes as well as actions' on carried over bills had to be re-keyed. Now these problem areas are solved via automated methods.

#### C. Bill Status "Batch" System

Utilizing information entered with the on-line system the following reports are provided in a batch mode.

1. Patron Status
2. Code Section Status Report
3. Committee History Report
4. Calendar of Actions
5. Passed Bill Status
6. Approved Report
7. Failed Report
8. Appropriations Tabulation Report

9. Vetoed Report
10. Carried Over Report
11. Final Disposition Report
12. Final Inquiry Report

#### D. Statutory Retrieval (ASPENSEARCH)

This programming system has for some time provided retrieval of information from the computerized Code of Virginia file using Boolean logic to express word relationships. Its capability has been extended so that remote entry of the search criteria and printing of the results can be accomplished in the Division of Legislative Services utilizing the computer equipment located there.

#### E. Subject Index System

Bills and resolutions are indexed; the indices keyed to magnetic tape and transmitted via telecommunications facilities to the computer. The computerized cumulative index file is then updated, reports generated and distributed to strategic points in the Capitol. Periodically the cumulative index of Bills and Resolutions is printed via photocomposition.

The portion of the cumulative index reports that pertains to bills affecting the Code of Virginia will be used to facilitate identification of Code conflicts at an early date so that these might be clarified in committee.

#### F. Bill Preparation Status System

This system of programs tracks a bill during its drafting stages. An enhancement to the system made this year is to allow entry and reporting of the introduced bill identification and date of introduction. Heretofore the LD number was the sole identifier and tracking of a bill became more difficult after its introduction.

#### G. Future Objectives

The possibility of redesigning and programming the subject index system to utilize the capabilities of the Qwik-Draft System for on-line keying, storing, and retrieval of the indices is being explored. Also, thought is being given to an automated printing and computer statute file to update the Code. (At present, legislation that is passed is re-keyed for printing the Code Supplements and then re-keyed for updating the computer file.)

The Commission shall continue to monitor the success of the computer operations serving the legislature. It shall assist in the development of additional applications in order that the most effective services are given to the legislature.

#### 5. THE COMMISSION IS CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF THE PROLIFERATION OF STUDY

COMMISSIONS, VIRGINIA ADVISORY LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STUDIES AND AGENCY STUDIES. UNTIL THE COMMISSION REPORTS ITS FINDING IT URGES THE RULES COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES AND SENATE TO CAREFULLY REVIEW ALL REQUESTS FOR STUDIES SO THAT EXCESSIVE EFFORTS AND EXPENSE MAY BE AVOIDED.

The ability of the General Assembly to carry out efficiently its responsibilities is directly related to its access to information. Intelligent policy cannot be formulated without adequate background information. The General Assembly is exceeding its current capacity to gain that information because it is attempting to undertake the resolution of too many issues in too short a time.

Legislators are being required to serve on more studies and absorb more reports than ever. The time required of legislators during the interim has increased tremendously. Also, annual sessions are restricting time spent on the conduct of a study since reports are requested in one year rather than two years which was the previous policy for conducting study work.

Duplication and fragmentation of study work makes it exceedingly difficult for members to absorb data and make policy decisions. The Commission hopes to determine a method of decreasing this costly method of resolving problems.

The Commission urges the Rules Committees of the House of Delegates and the Senate to continue to monitor study requests so that the greatest amount of coordination possible may be achieved until the Commission can thoroughly investigate this matter and present its recommendations. The Commission recommends that the Division of Legislative Services provide the Committees with an index of past and present studies to assist them in their deliberations.

## CONCLUSION

We feel that the Commission's studies over the past seven years have been the most thorough and far-reaching examination of the legislative process to date. The implementation of our recommendations has greatly facilitated the successful operation of our legislative machinery. We are nevertheless convinced that the need for additional study remains. The job of reviewing procedures, facilities and staff is one which is never done.

The Commission hopes to continue its efforts on behalf of the General Assembly and report again to the next session on its progress.

Respectfully submitted,

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John Warren Cooke, Chairman

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John N. Dalton  
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Hunter B. Andrews  
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Vincent F. Callahan, Jr.  
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Joseph V. Gartlan, Jr.  
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Robert R. Gwathmey, III  
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Lewis A. McMurrin, Jr.  
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Philip B. Morris  
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\*William F. Parkerson, Jr.  
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Ford C. Quillen  
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James M. Thomson  
.....  
Edward E. Willey

\*Senator Parkerson expresses reservations to this report which appear in the following dissent.



**STATEMENT OF SENATOR WILLIAM F. PARKERSON, JR.**

I concur in all of the facilities portion of the report except for the proposal to provide each member of the General Assembly with a suite of offices in the Life of Virginia Insurance Building.

The first priority, as I see it, is the need for proper Committee Room space that will adequately accommodate public hearings. The report recommends this, and I support this major improvement. Moreover, this space can be programmed for year-round use, and thus maximize the use of this space.

Similarly, the proposal to consolidate the functions of the Division of Legislative Services in the Life Insurance Building is commendable and represents again a year-round use of valuable space.

The use of the existing dining facilities solves a real present need, and these facilities can also be used year-round.

My disagreement involves the proposal to provide office suites for each member of the General Assembly. In my view, the existing facilities that the legislators have in the Eighth Street Office Building, while less than desirable, do serve the needs of the legislators during that portion of each year that the General Assembly is in session. I cannot personally justify the present proposal to use a large amount of expensive office space in the Life of Virginia Insurance Building for the limited use that will be made of such facilities by the legislators.

Should the remaining portion of the proposals be implemented, the renovation costs would be drastically reduced and the principal priority of needs would be met.

.....  
William F. Parkerson, Jr.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO.....**

**Authorizing the Committees on Rules of the House of Delegates and the Senate to provide additional facilities for the General Assembly and its staff.**

**RESOLVED** by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Committees on Rules of the House of Delegates and the Senate are hereby authorized and empowered, at such time as the committees deem advisable, to implement such measures as may be necessary to provide additional space in which the General Assembly and its staff may carry on the legislative process pursuant to the recommendation of the Commission of the Legislative Process that portions of the building located on Capitol Street and now occupied in part by the Life Insurance Company of Virginia be renovated for legislative use. This resolution is intended to satisfy the requirement for the same as specified in § 51-111.52:5 of the Code of Virginia.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO.....**

Directing the Division of Legislative Services to develop a staffing program for standing committees and to allocate funds.

WHEREAS, in recent years the standing committees of the General Assembly have adopted the practice of retaining the services of legal counsel during legislative sessions; and

WHEREAS, the services thus provided have assisted the committees in more expeditiously discharging their duties; and

WHEREAS, despite the several merits of the present arrangement further improvement is possible if staff is provided on a year-round basis; and

WHEREAS, in addition to legal staff, much research of a non-legal nature is required by the committees; and

WHEREAS, in providing year-round legal and research staff the most efficient system will exist if staff is available from a central office which can direct and coordinate staff personnel thus maximizing the benefits offered and utilizing the time of staff personnel to the greatest extent; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Division of Legislative Services, under the direction of the Committees on Rules, is directed to proceed with the development, implementation and maintenance of a program to provide professional staff to the standing committees of the General Assembly.

The program shall be designed to:

1. Maximize the talents of current personnel;
2. Retain the services of only such additional persons whose activities can be coordinated with the present staff; and
3. Provide both legal and research capabilities during and between sessions.

The initial stages of the program shall be implemented by the time of the nineteen hundred seventy-six session of the General Assembly.

For the purpose of carrying out its duties as prescribed herein the sum of sixty thousand dollars is allocated to the Division of Legislative Services from the general appropriation to the General Assembly.

