

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

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1996 Regular Session
6lr0741

By: Delegates Goldwater, Eckardt, Pitkin, Petzold, Grosfeld, Walkup, Nathan-Pulliam, Frush, Kirk, Bobo, and Kopp

Introduced and read first time: January 18, 1996

Assigned to: Environmental Matters

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1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Osteoporosis Prevention and Education Program**

3 FOR the purpose of requesting the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene to establish
4 a task force of local medical experts to study and develop ideas and strategies to
5 reduce the incidence of osteoporosis among the citizens of Maryland, including
6 initiating a certain osteoporosis prevention and education program; requiring the
7 task force to issue a certain report by a certain date; providing for certain notice
8 procedures for meetings of the task force; and generally relating to studying and
9 developing ideas and strategies to reduce the incidence of osteoporosis among
10 citizens of Maryland.

11 WHEREAS, 25 million Americans are stricken with osteoporosis - a preventable
12 disorder which occurs most frequently among older people, causing loss of bone mass;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, Experts estimate that, in the United States, one in two women and one
15 in five men will suffer a bone fracture because of osteoporosis; and

16 WHEREAS, Nationally, osteoporosis results in 1.5 million fractures of the hip,
17 spine, wrist, and other bones, with a cost of at least \$18 million in health care and
18 associated expenses; and

19 WHEREAS, Osteoporosis is frequently a silent, undiagnosed disease, affecting
20 apparently healthy individuals, which only becomes apparent when the individual suffers
21 an unexpected broken bone often as a result of a trivial event, such as a hug or a hard
22 sneeze; and

23 WHEREAS, Osteoporosis, if allowed to progress undetected to the point of bone
24 fracture, can and frequently does cause disability and institutionalization, thereby
25 reducing the quality and length of the individual's life and exacting a heavy toll in
26 increased health costs; and

27 WHEREAS, Although there is presently no cure for osteoporosis, medical experts
28 agree that prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment can reduce the prevalence of this
29 devastating disease; and

30 WHEREAS, Many people, even medical experts, are not aware of the crucial need
31 to educate people, particularly women, of the preventive steps, such as adequate calcium

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1 intake, continued exercise throughout life, and, in the case of older women, estrogen
2 replacement therapy under appropriate circumstances; and

3 WHEREAS, The safe and painless tests of bone mass measurement should be
4 publicized among physicians and the public in order to reduce the costly effects of broken
5 bones resulting from osteoporosis; and

6 WHEREAS, Current expert thinking emphasizes the need to educate young people
7 in this regard so that such young people will take the steps to build and preserve strong
8 bones throughout their lives; and

9 WHEREAS, If the public can be made aware of the simple solutions to prevention
10 of this devastating disease, osteoporosis is preventable and the costs of long-term care
11 among older Americans will be reduced; now, therefore, be it

12 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the
13 Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene is requested to:

14 (1) Establish a task force made up of local medical experts to study and
15 develop ideas and strategies to reduce the incidence of osteoporosis among the citizens of
16 Maryland; and

17 (2) Initiate, within available resources, an osteoporosis prevention and
18 education program that will promote:

19 (i) Public knowledge of osteoporosis;

20 (ii) Its causes and prevention;

21 (iii) The value of early detection of this disorder; and

22 (iv) The benefits and risks of available treatments; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall issue a report on its study to the Governor
24 and, in accordance with § 2-1312 of the State Government Article, to the General
25 Assembly on or before December 31, 1996; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That notice of each meeting of the Task Force be made public by
27 delivering a copy of the meeting notice to the Legislative Information Officer, Room B-6,
28 Department of Legislative Reference, Legislative Services Building, 90 State Circle,
29 Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991. The notice should be delivered no later than Tuesday
30 afternoon at 4:00 p.m. for inclusion in the weekly Hearing Schedule; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
32 Legislative Reference to the Honorable Parris N. Glendening, Governor of Maryland; the
33 Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; the
34 Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr., Speaker of the House of Delegates; and the Honorable
35 Martin P. Wasserman, M.D., Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene.