

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

Unofficial Copy
L1

1996 Regular Session
6r2984

By: Delegate Curran

Introduced and read first time: February 29, 1996

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Governing Local Governments Into the 21st Century**

3 FOR the purpose of informing county and municipal governments in Maryland about the
4 concept of performance-based governance with its reliance on performance
5 measuring for purposes of guiding their practices and policies through the fiscal
6 uncertainties of the 1990's and strengthening public accountability.

7 WHEREAS, Implications attendant to the economic uncertainty of tomorrow
8 necessitate a commitment of preparedness on the part of county and municipal
9 governments to successfully meet the challenges of the 21st Century; and

10 WHEREAS, Sluggish economic growth, reduced federal and State financial
11 assistance, increased demands for services and public intolerance for additional taxes and
12 fees underscore the importance and timeliness of further enhancing governmental
13 efficiency and effectiveness, responsiveness, and accountability in the eyes of the public;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, Emerging as a common denominator throughout the country is a shift
16 towards a new approach of governing - a functional transformation mirroring the private
17 sector - and it is called, performance-based governance with its reliance on performance
18 measuring; and

19 WHEREAS, Performance-based governance enlightens the public to what
20 government is doing with their tax dollars by (1) identifying a preferred vision for the
21 future; (2) formulating goals to achieve the vision which are accomplished via realization
22 of attendant objectives; (3) utilizing quantifiable performance measures (benchmarks) to
23 gauge, monitor and report progress through the year 2000 and beyond; and (4) structuring
24 policies and resource allocation decisions that are responsive to and consistent with the
25 vision, goals and objectives; and

26 WHEREAS, Performance-based governance represents a fundamental departure
27 from typical governance because it is predicated upon an outcome oriented management
28 strategy; that is, the articulation of quantifiable data useful in assessing not only how a
29 government entity utilized its resources, but also what its citizens are receiving for the use
30 of public funds and how efficiently and effectively those funds are being used; and

31 WHEREAS, Harford County held a symposium on September 28, 1995 for the
32 purpose of encouraging jurisdictional benchmarking so proven strategies of improving

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2

1 operational efficiency and effectiveness could be shared with one another in the spirit of
2 a progressive local government partnership for the future; and

3 WHEREAS, The State's Legislative Auditor (Office of Legislative Audits,
4 Department of Fiscal Services) recommended in a special report to the Joint Budget and
5 Audit Committee on May 9, 1995, entitled Use of Performance Measures to Improve
6 Accountability, that the State should shift towards performance measuring through
7 statutory directive; and

8 WHEREAS, Beyond Maryland, (1) the United States Congress mandated that all
9 federal agencies - via the 1993 Government Performance and Results Act - effect
10 performance measuring by the year 2000; (2) that 18 states have enacted legislation to
11 adopt reforms that stress accountability for results through the resource allocation
12 process; and (3) that the Government Finance Officers Association found in a recent
13 study of 554 budgets for counties and cities across the country that 330 or 60% utilize
14 performance measures; and

15 WHEREAS, Performance-based governance will not solve all the fiscal difficulties
16 facing local governments nor should overnight results be expected; however, it is
17 reflective of the local governments' ongoing commitment to identify and document the
18 programs, policies and practices that govern their usage of scarce financial resources; and

19 WHEREAS, County and municipal governments in Maryland have always taken
20 pride in being on the "cutting edge" with respect to the efficient delivery of public
21 services and responsiveness to the concerns of their citizenry; and

22 WHEREAS, Local governments' pursuit of performance-based governance with its
23 reliance on performance measuring is envisioned to bolster public confidence, improve
24 operational efficiency and strengthen accountability in ways that continue to make local
25 governments in Maryland efficiency-related models worthy of emulation; and

26 WHEREAS, This Resolution should not be construed, either directly or indirectly,
27 as a State mandate for county and municipal governments to initiate performance-based
28 governance; but, instead, to familiarize and inform local governments about the concept
29 so they can determine whether or not it is suitable for guiding their practices and policies
30 through the economic uncertainties of the 1990's; now, therefore, be it

31 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That local
32 governments of the State are encouraged to consider the concept of performance-based
33 governance with its reliance on performance measuring for its applicability and usage in
34 guiding their practices and policies in order to greet the 21st Century with a competitive
35 advantage; and be it further

36 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
37 Legislative Reference to the Honorable Parris N. Glendening, Governor of Maryland; the
38 Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., President of the Senate of Maryland; the
39 Honorable Casper R. Taylor, Jr., Speaker of the House of Delegates; the Maryland
40 Association of Counties; and the Maryland Municipal League.