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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 41

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 14, 2026

*Directing the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission to study local zoning ordinances and permitting and approval processes for housing projects. Report.*

Patron—Singh

**Committee Referral Pending**

10 WHEREAS, residents of the Commonwealth face a housing shortage, with a significant lack of affordable  
11 housing units for purchase or rent, and while much of the land zoned for residential development in the  
12 Commonwealth is approved for the construction of single-family homes, such homes often come with a much  
13 higher price tag than a home in a multi-family unit, including townhomes, row homes, or apartment  
14 complexes; and

14 complexes, and  
15 WHEREAS, a recent report released by HousingForward Virginia and the National Zoning Atlas revealed  
16 that only five percent of zoned residential land in the Commonwealth allows apartment complexes by right  
17 without special exception permits; and

18       WHEREAS, inclusionary zoning programs encourage below-market rate units in new housing  
19       developments in exchange for significant developer incentives; and

20 developments in creating more significant developer incentives; and  
21 WHEREAS, the Code of Virginia provides for mandatory inclusionary zoning programs to be adopted by  
22 ordinance in only six localities, including the Cities of Alexandria, Charlottesville, Fairfax, and Falls Church  
23 and Albemarle and Loudoun Counties, where in all new housing developments affordable housing unit set-  
-asides are required; and

24        WHEREAS, voluntary inclusionary zoning is available to all other localities in the Commonwealth, where  
25 such localities may only require affordable housing unit set-asides if a developer requests a land-use  
26 exemption, including re-zonings and special use permits; and

27        WHEREAS, zoning ordinances with minimum lot sizes, strict restrictions or bans on multi-family  
28 dwellings, and lengthy permitting and approval processes discourage developers from seeking permits to  
29 develop housing that may be more affordable for renters or families with lower incomes; and

30 WHEREAS, a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of local zoning laws and the permitting and project  
31 approval processes are necessary to determine how the Commonwealth can best address an overall increase  
32 in housing needs and support an increase in production of affordable housing for residents; now, therefore, be  
33 it

34 RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Joint Legislative Audit and  
35 Review Commission be directed to study local zoning ordinances and permitting and approval processes for  
36 housing projects.

37 In conducting its study, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall (i) evaluate previously  
38 conducted studies on housing needs in the Commonwealth to determine where statutory requirements have  
39 provided incentives to localities and developers to increase the number of affordable housing projects and  
40 where gaps in statutory language still exist that could be amended to allow for or incentivize increased  
41 housing production to meet community needs; (ii) evaluate specific zoning restrictions in localities across the  
42 Commonwealth and determine where such restrictions are concentrated in comparison to locations where the  
43 greatest need for additional housing is identified; (iii) assess the correlation between restrictive zoning,  
44 stricter, more convoluted permitting processes, a lower housing supply, and increased costs; (iv) examine the  
45 impact of streamlined permitting processes with expedited reviews and approval times on the number of  
46 multi-family housing project proposals submitted by developers; and (v) provide recommendations to address  
47 regulations, ordinances, and processes that inhibit the approval and construction of multi-family or smaller  
48 square-footage housing projects in order to improve access to more affordable housing for residents of the  
49 Commonwealth, including any suggested actions requiring legislation.

50       Technical assistance shall be provided to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission by the  
51       Virginia Housing Commission and the Department of Housing and Community Development. All agencies  
52       of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission for this  
53       study, upon request.

54 The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2026,  
55 and the chair shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its  
56 findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2027 Regular Session of the General  
57 Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission  
58 intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for

59 publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and report shall be submitted as  
60 provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative  
61 documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.