

Speaker's Office

Virginia House of Delegates

RICHMOND

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House Republicans Advance Health Care Access and Competition Reform Legislation

-- Reform of Certificate of Public Need Criteria Endorsed in
Unanimous Committee Vote --

-- Bipartisan Support of House Republican
Initiative Demonstrates Practical Solution --

RICHMOND, VA – Beginning their work on practical solutions that will contribute to restoring economic prosperity in Virginia, Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates William J. Howell (R-Stafford) and Delegate Phillip A. Hamilton (R-Newport News) today applauded the House Health, Welfare & Institutions Committee for their unanimous endorsement of Certificate of Public Need (COPN) Reform. **House Bill 1598** <<http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?ses=091&typ=bil&val=hb1598>> , which was introduced by Delegate Hamilton, represents the most comprehensive reform of Virginia's COPN law since it passed in 1973.

"The bill represents significant legislative reform to what has been a controversial health care topic over the past twenty years," commented Delegate Hamilton, Chairman of the House Health, Welfare & Institutions Committee. "Through the cooperative and collaborative

work of the committee, the administration, and the healthcare provider network, consensus on a framework for addressing the COPN issue has been developed."

The major change involved the criteria to be considered by the Commissioner of Health when reviewing COPN applications. Currently, there are 21 criteria to be considered. Under the legislation, there will be 8 criteria. In many cases, criteria were consolidated for clarification purposes or eliminated because they were not being seriously considered. The primary areas of focus for the new criteria is patient access to services, affordability and financial feasibility of a health care project, community support for a project, institutional competition within a health planning region, and health care services to the indigent population in a region.

"These common sense reforms will ensure real results in increasing competition in the delivery of health care services, opening greater access to high quality care throughout the Commonwealth," remarked Speaker Howell. "I appreciate the leadership of Chairman Hamilton in forging a consensus on this complex issue. This is just another example of the type of practical free market solutions House Republicans have and will continue to move forward to create jobs and strengthen our economy."