

REPORT OF THE LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION
TO THE 1971 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Cost and Feasibility of Teaching
First Aid in the Public Schools

Raleigh, North Carolina

November 13, 1970

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REPORT BY THE LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION
TO THE 1971 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Cost and Feasibility of Teaching
First Aid in the Public Schools

Introduction

The Legislative Research Commission was directed by House Resolution 1432 to study the cost and feasibility of teaching first aid in the public schools. Pursuant to this directive, the Health Committee of the Commission conducted a public hearing on March 27, 1970, at which time representatives of different groups concerned with first aid presented general information. They were:

1. Mr. Herbert Bateman
Director of the Medical Self-Help Program
2. Mr. Norman Leafe, Supervisor, Health and Physical Education, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
3. Mr. Jon Martindale
American Red Cross First Aid Program
4. Grace H. Daniel, Chief, Health Education Section, State Board of Health

Background

Resolution 1432 recognizes the great need in our society today that every citizen have some basic knowledge of the rules of first aid to save his own life and the lives of others, to reduce the impact of certain tragedies, and to prevent the occurrence of accidents. It is also recognized that the over-all health and well-being of the citizenry can be improved by early attention through training to health maintenance and causes of injuries. All groups appearing before the committee concurred in this need.

A question that must be answered is "Can a comprehensive job be done without a specific mandate from the Legislature?"

First aid training in the public schools is presently utilizing existing programs such as the Standard First Aid Course offered by the American National Red Cross and the Medical Self-Help Training Program which is sponsored jointly by the State Board of Health and Civil Defense Agency. The Federal Government supplies the manual and teaching aids free of charge to school districts who wish to participate in Medical Self-Help. Presently a large percentage of school systems in the State are participating in the Medical Self-Help Program. Not all schools in each system participate, however.

The Medical Self-Help Training Program is slanted more toward large-scale disasters when professional help may not be available and relates the student more closely to family and community needs. It goes beyond basic first aid and prepares the student to cope with urban or rural problems under various environmental conditions and to provide nursing care for the sick and injured.

The Red Cross Standard First Aid Course is recognized as excellent first aid training. This course, combined with the Medical Self-Help Training Program, would be the ideal training for high school students. The major problem of implementation is the training and qualification of instructors. Lack of available time for the course seems to be a problem also.

Several reasons were given by State education and health professionals for not specifically requiring first aid in the public schools. They are:

1. A curriculum set by legislation could become a rigid,

piece-meal program filled by special interests which may not meet the health and safety needs and interests of children today.

2. Students in North Carolina already have many opportunities to learn first aid.
3. Legislation does not assure implementation.
4. First aid is presently a unit in the total health education program.

In response to the first reason, it should be noted that the Legislature has previously in fact directed that the subjects of alcoholism and narcotism be taught in public schools and that an appropriate curriculum be developed by the State Superintendent (See G.S. 115-37 and 115-198).

Findings

Because the Committee believes that knowledge and skills in first aid should be emphasized in our public schools, it was interested in the extent and adequacy of first aid information and training. More specific information was needed which the Department of Public Instruction was best able to give. Therefore, specific questions were posed which the Department of Public Instruction was asked to answer. The following is some of the information provided by the Department of Public Instruction to the Committee on Health:

(1) There are 1,791 schools which provide health instruction in grades 1 through 6 or 8. Each grade level instructional program contains principles of first aid. Artificial respiration is included in grades 6, 7 and 8. There are 839,898 children who are

involved in this elementary program. Probably less than 10 percent of the teachers taking part in this program have first aid certificates, but 75 percent of them have had a course in Health Education which included a unit in first aid.

(2) All students are required to take a full year of health and physical education at the ninth grade level. This involves approximately 75,000 youngsters each year. This course curriculum includes a unit on first aid. The only guide furnished at the state level is the textbook.

(3) Physical education is offered in approximately 200 high schools out of the 300 at grade levels above the ninth. The enrollment above grade nine is 250,000. The Red Cross sponsors first aid programs in and out of schools. Some of their programs are carried out as a part of the physical education program. For the fiscal year ending on June 30, 1969, 28,586 students received certificates for completing the Red Cross First Aid Course. Most of these students were among the 250,000 enrolled in grades 10-12. There were 29,513 students trained during the same period under the Medical Self-Help Program. Thus, approximately 60,000 youngsters were trained in the two programs.

Recommendations

(1) It is recommended that the public schools strengthen health education programs in terms of basic first aid as well as the development of knowledge concerning health maintenance, the importance of preventive health practices and recognition of the dangers of drug abuse.

(2) It is recommended that more time be allotted to health education programs of which first aid, medical self-help, and drug

abuse are a part and that whenever possible health educators rather than physical education teachers be utilized for this purpose. The school can serve as an excellent vehicle through which intensive health education programs can be offered to a large segment of our population. With a population better informed about such health matters, the burden of primary physicians, dentists and other health care providers will be considerably lessened and the possibilities will be increased for improving the health status of the people of North Carolina.

(3) It is recommended that legislation be adopted to require the Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and implement an appropriate curriculum in basic first aid at all grade levels which would meet the needs and cover the deficiencies now apparent in the State's total health education program.

(4) It is recommended that legislation be adopted requiring that the first aid curriculum developed on a state level in cooperation with local officials be implemented and taught in all local units at the appropriate grade levels so that no child may leave the North Carolina public education system without having received adequate training in first aid or medical self-help.

(5) It is recommended that increased emphasis on drug abuse education be placed at all levels of public education by the responsible officials and teachers. Inasmuch as instruction in narcotism and alcoholism has been required in public schools since 1955 by legislation, it is recommended that new efforts be made to develop effective teaching materials and methods in these sub-

jects so as to meet the needs of young people to deal with these dangers to their health and well-being.

Appendix A

Draft Bill

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE TEACHING OF FIRST AID IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WHEREAS, it is recognized that there is a great need in our society today that every citizen have some basic knowledge of the rules of first aid to save his own life and the lives of others, to reduce the impact of certain tragedies, and to prevent the occurrence of accidents; and

WHEREAS, it is also recognized that the over-all health and well-being of the citizenry can be improved by early attention through training to health maintenance and causes of injuries; and

WHEREAS, the subjects of alcoholism and narcotism have been by law required to be taught in public schools in North Carolina since 1955 and first aid is also of great importance and should be a required subject for all students in public schools; NOW, THEREFORE, The General Assembly of North Carolina do enact:

Section 1. G.S. 115-37, as it appears in the 1969 Cumulative Supplement to Volume 3A of the General Statutes, is hereby amended by adding the words "and first aid" after the word "narcotism" in line 6 thereof, so that it reads:

"Subjects Taught in Public Schools. County and city boards of education shall provide for the efficient teaching in each grade of all subjects included in the outline course of study prepared by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, which course of study shall include instruction in Americanism, government of the State of North Carolina, government of the United States, fire prevention, alcoholism, narcotism and first aid at the appropriate grade levels. Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit city or county boards of education from operating a nongraded system in which pupils are taught at their individual learning levels."

Sec. 2. G.S. 115-198, as it appears in the 1969 Cumulative Supplement to Volume 3A of the General Statutes, is hereby amended by adding in the second paragraph thereof the words "and first aid" after the word "narcotism" in line 7 thereof, so that the second paragraph reads:

"The State Superintendent shall prepare a course of study for each grade of the school system which shall outline the appropriate subjects to be taught, together with directions as to the best methods of teaching them as guidance for the teachers. There shall be included in the course of study for each grade outlines and suggestions for teaching the subject of Americanism; and in one or more grades, as directed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, outlines for the teaching of alcoholism, narcotism and first aid."

Sec. 3. G.S. 115-204, as it appears in 1966 Replacement Volume 3A of the General Statutes, is hereby amended by adding the words "and practical instruction in first aid" after the word "narcotism" in line 4 thereof, so that the first sentence reads:

"There shall be organized and administered under the general supervision of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction a comprehensive program of physical education and of health education including scientific instruction in the subjects of alcoholism and narcotism and practical instruction in first aid."

Sec. 4. All laws and clauses of laws in conflict with this act are hereby repealed.

Sec. 5. This act shall become effective upon ratification.

Appendix B

Materials on File with the Legislative
Research Commission

Materials on File with the Legislative
Research Commission

- (1) Remarks before the Committee on Health by Herbert M. Bateman, Chief, Health Mobilization Section, North Carolina State Board of Health.
- (2) Remarks before the Committee on Health by Grace H. Daniel, Chief, Health Education Section, North Carolina State Board of Health.
- (3) Remarks before Committee on Health by Jon J. Martindale, Safety Programs Representative, American National Red Cross.
- (4) Report on the Status of First Aid Instruction in North Carolina by the Department of Public Instruction.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

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NORTH CAROLINA
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
1969 SESSION

HOUSE RESOLUTION 1432

SHORT TITLE: First-Aid Courses in Public High Schools.

Sponsors: Representative Johnson of Duplin.

Referred to: Calendar.

July 2

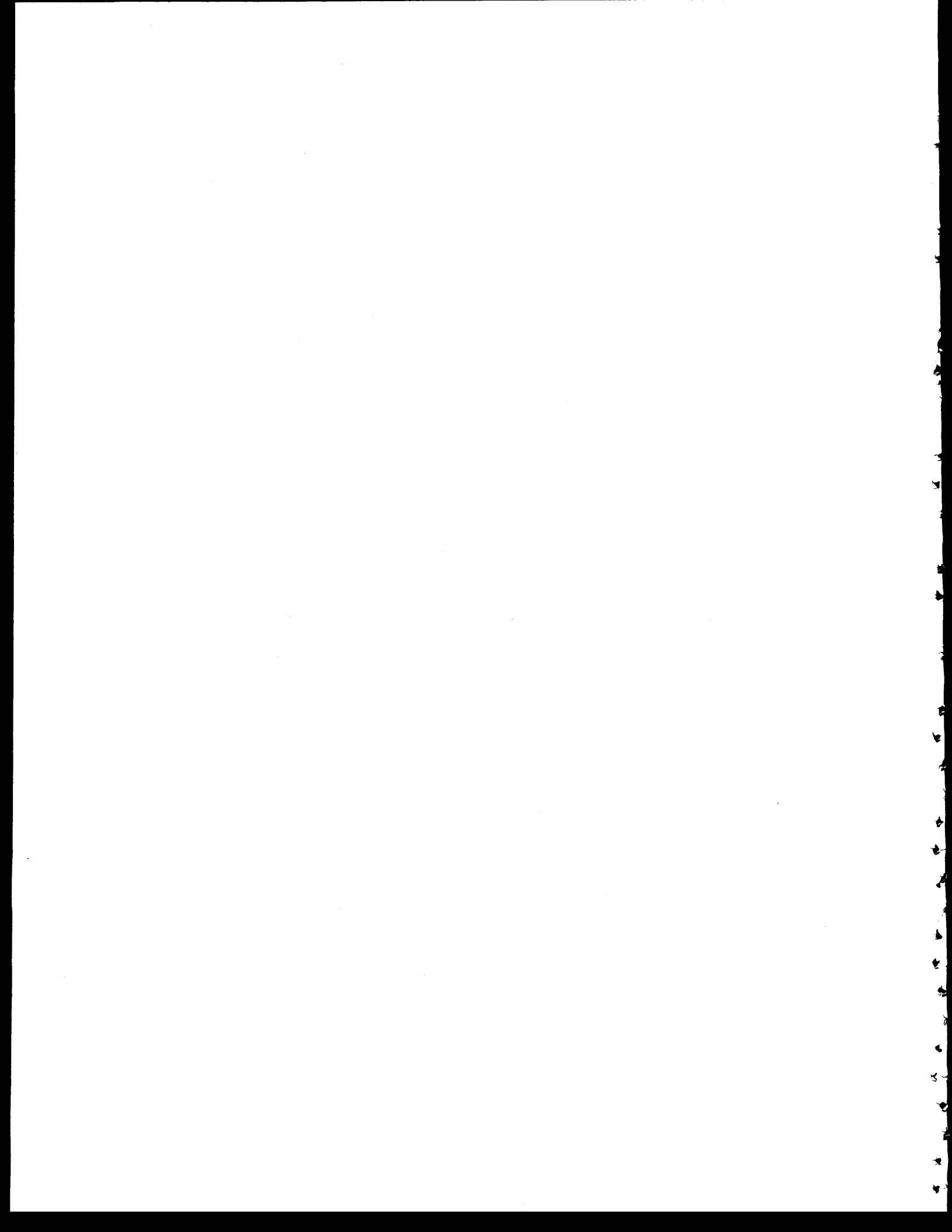
1 A HOUSE RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COMMISSION
2 TO STUDY THE COST AND FEASIBILITY OF TEACHING "FIRST AID"
3 COURSES IN THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA.

4 Be is resolved by the House of Representatives:

5 Section 1. The Legislative Research Commission is
6 hereby directed to study the cost and feasibility of having the
7 "Red Cross Standard First Aid Course" taught in all of the public
8 high schools in North Carolina.

9 Sec. 2. The Legislative Research Commission shall
10 report its findings and any recommendations resulting from this
11 study to the 1971 General Assembly.

12 Sec. 3. This Resolution shall become effective upon its
13 adoption.

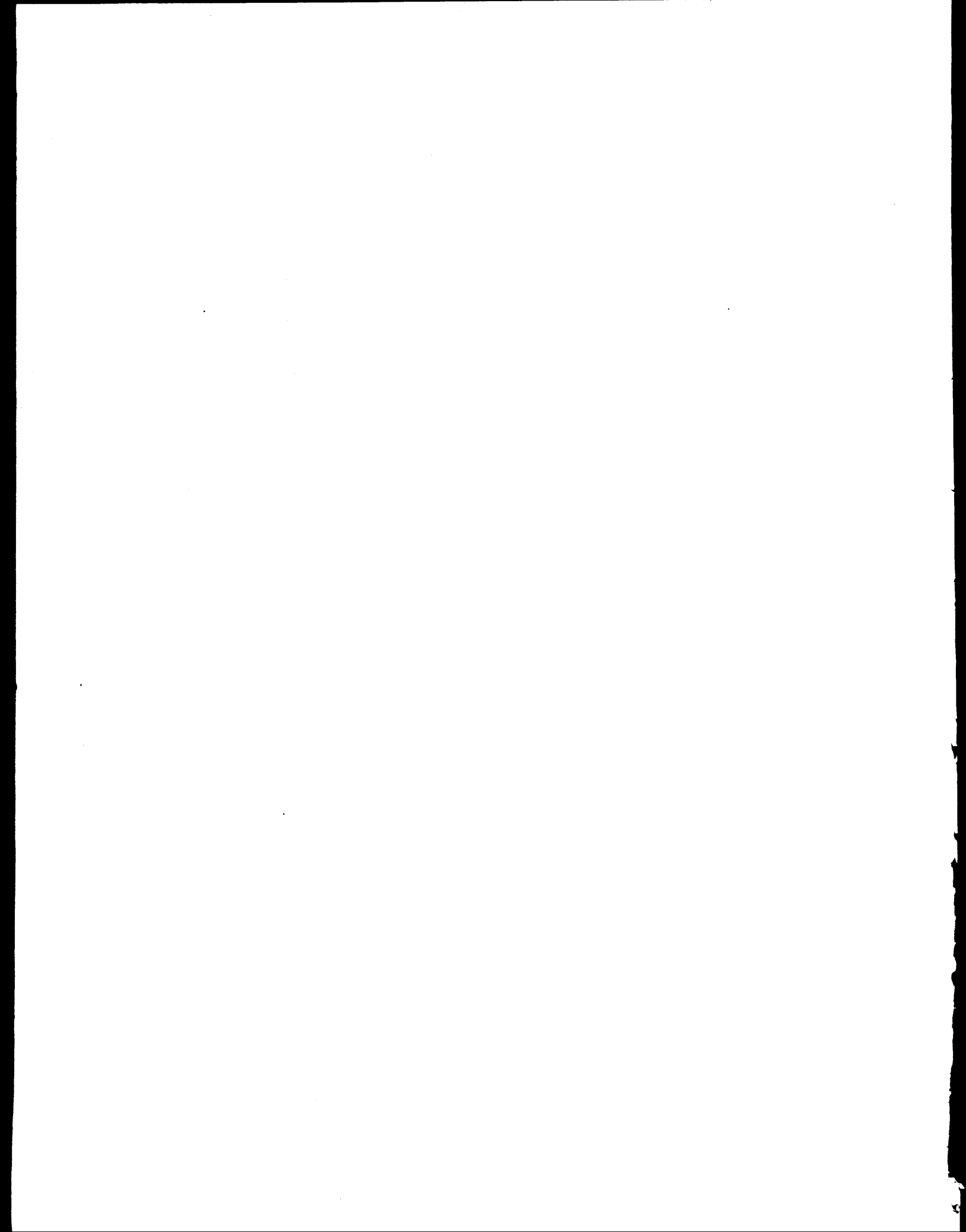


LEGISLATIVE ETHICS

&

REPORTING

VIOLENT WOUNDS



TO THE MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

The Legislative Research Commission herewith reports to the 1971 General Assembly its findings and recommendations concerning Legislative Ethics, and Reporting Violent Wounds.

These reports were initiated by a committee of the Legislative Research Commission on Special Studies. The Committee on Special Studies consisted of:

Senator Edgar J. Gurganus, Chairman

Representative Liston B. Ramsey, Vice Chairman

Senator John R. Boger, Jr.

Representative Dwight W. Quinn

The Legislative Research Commission reviewed the Committee proceedings and adopted these reports November 13, 1970.

Respectfully,

Philip P. Godwin, Speaker

Senator N. Hector McGeachy, Jr.

Co-Chairmen, Legislative Research Commission