

2016 -- H 7989

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LC005522
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N

**CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE LOW AND
MODERATE INCOME HOUSING ACT**

Introduced By: Representatives Maldonado, Morin, Carson, Barros, and Carnevale

Date Introduced: March 24, 2016

Referred To: House Municipal Government

1 WHEREAS, In Rhode Island, fourteen cities and towns have less than five percent
2 affordable housing; and

3 WHEREAS, Only five of the state's 39 cities and towns, Central Falls, Newport, New
4 Shoreham, Providence and Woonsocket, have met the state-mandated ten percent affordable
5 housing threshold, with many of the state's cities and towns seemingly disregarding the
6 benchmark; and

7 WHEREAS, There exists a high concentration of poverty in the cities of Central Falls,
8 Providence, Pawtucket, and Woonsocket; and

9 WHEREAS, There is a paramount need for millennial housing for young professionals to
10 stabilize and grow cities such as Central Falls, yet there are very few affordable home ownership
11 opportunities, and the majority of housing consists of rental units in triple-deckers owned by
12 absentee landlords; and

13 WHEREAS, According to the Housing Works Report, across the United States, 45
14 percent of Latino households own their own homes, but in Rhode Island that number is drastically
15 lower at 26 percent; and

16 WHEREAS, Rhode Island also has the lowest non-white homeownership rate in the
17 United States and of the overall homeownership rate of 60 percent, only 32 percent of that
18 number is non-whites. Rhode Island was given an "F" rating by the Corporation for Enterprise
19 Development for this disparity; and

1 WHEREAS, Although redlining, the practice of limiting lending in certain
2 neighborhoods regardless of the individual's creditworthiness, is banned by federal law, it
3 continues to plague our state's minority neighborhoods; and

4 WHEREAS, It is essential that these institutional practices, discriminatory actions, and
5 public policies be addressed and that solutions be found; now, therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created
7 consisting of thirteen (13) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the Rhode Island
8 House of Representatives, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by
9 the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the President of the RI Builders Association, or
10 designee; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of Rhode Island Housing, or designee; one
11 of whom shall be the President of the Housing Network of Rhode Island, or designee; one of
12 whom shall be the Board Chair of Grow Smart RI, or designee; one of whom shall be the
13 Executive Director of the Rhode Island Coalition for the Homeless, or designee; four (4) of whom
14 shall be members of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, two (2) of whom shall be
15 residents of a Rhode Island city or town with a population of 35,000 or more residents, and two
16 (2) of whom shall be residents of a Rhode Island city or town with a population of less than
17 35,000 residents, all of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and one of whom
18 shall be the Executive Director of Pawtucket-Central Falls Development, or designee.

19 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a permanent advisory
20 commission, a legislative study commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly
21 resolution, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu
22 of a legislator, provided that the majority leader or the minority leader of the political party which
23 is entitled to the appointment consents to the member of the general public.

24 The purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study of the Rhode
25 Island Low and Moderate Income Housing Act including, but not limited to a review of:

- 26 1. State-wide data for low and moderate income housing by city and town;
- 27 2. Cities' and towns' strategic economic and housing plans;
- 28 3. The Brookings Institute reports and other relevant data referencing affordable housing;
- 29 and
- 30 4. Cities' and towns' compliance, performance, and barriers to implementation; and

31 The commission shall provide recommendations for aiding cities and towns to
32 successfully meet requirements of the Act.

33 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at
34 the call of the Speaker of the House and organize and shall select a chairperson from among the

1 legislators.

2 Vacancies in said commission shall be filled in like manner as the original appointment.

3 The membership of said commission shall receive no compensation for their services.

4 All departments and agencies of the state, shall furnish such advice and information,
5 documentary and otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or
6 desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of this resolution.

7 The Speaker of the House is hereby authorized and directed to provide suitable quarters
8 for said commission; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the
10 House of Representatives no later than February 11, 2017, and said commission shall expire on
11 June 11, 2017.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
HOUSE RESOLUTION
CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE LOW AND
MODERATE INCOME HOUSING ACT

1 This resolution would create a thirteen (13) member special legislative study
2 commission whose purpose it would be to make a comprehensive study on implementation of the
3 Low and Moderate Income Housing Act in the State of Rhode Island, and who would report back
4 to the House of Representatives no later than February 11, 2017, and whose life would expire on
5 June 11, 2017.

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