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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT - RHODE ISLAND SAILING  
EVENTS COMMISSION

Introduced By: Senators Felag, Coyne, Seveney, and DiPalma

Date Introduced: June 29, 2017

Referred To: Placed on Senate Calendar

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Legislative Findings.

2 (1) Rhode Island has had a long history of yacht racing, was home of the designers and  
3 builders of the fastest and most elegant sailboats of the Gilded Age and was the site of the  
4 America's Cup defense from 1930 to 1983.

5 (2) Rhode Island has a worldwide reputation as an excellent venue for sailing and boating  
6 events, including the National One-Design Championship, the Newport to Bermuda Race and the  
7 Single-Handed Trans-Atlantic Ocean Race.

8 (3) Rhode Island is home to highly developed marine facilities, such as the Newport  
9 Shipyard, Melville Marina and numerous yacht clubs based in the seventeen (17) coastal  
10 communities.

11 (4) Major improvements to the facilities at Fort Adams State Park provide critical support  
12 for championship sailing in Rhode Island while attracting and enhancing large-scale competitive  
13 sailing events to the state.

14 (5) These improvements and coordinated efforts of state and private organizations have  
15 helped attract new international championship racing events, including the Volvo Around the  
16 World Ocean Race in 2018.

17 (6) The sport of sailing has changed dramatically since 1980 when the Rhode Island State  
18 Yachting Committee was formed, with sailing events attracting larger audiences, generating

1 greater economic impact and needing increased support from state and host communities.

2 SECTION 2. TITLE 42 of the General Laws entitled "State Affairs and Government" is  
3 hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

4 CHAPTER 159

5 RHODE ISLAND SAILING EVENTS COMMISSION

6 **42-159-1. Short title.**

7 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Rhode Island Sailing Events  
8 Commission."

9 **42-159-2. Creation of the commission.**

10 There is hereby created and established a permanent commission to be known as the  
11 Rhode Island Sailing Events Commission hereinafter referred to as the "commission."

12 **42-159-3. Membership of the commission.**

13 (a) The commission shall consist of nineteen (19) members as follows:

14 (1) The director of the department of environmental management, or designee;

15 (2) The president of the Narragansett Bay Yacht Association, or designee;

16 (3) The chief executive officer of US Sailing, or designee;

17 (4) The chief executive officer of SAIL TO PREVAIL, or designee;

18 (5) The Southern Regional Director of the New England Inter-Collegiate Sailing  
19 Association, or designee;

20 (6) The executive director of Sail Newport, or designee;

21 (7) The president/chief executive officer of Discover Newport, or designee;

22 (8) The chairperson of the board of directors of the Rhode Island Marine Trades  
23 Association (RIMTA), or designee;

24 (9) A representative of the city of Newport, to be appointed by the mayor of the city of  
25 Newport;

26 (10) One representative each from four (4) Rhode Island yacht clubs, to be appointed by  
27 the president of the Narragansett Bay Yachting Association; and

28 (11) Six (6) representatives from the general public, three (3) of whom shall be appointed  
29 by the speaker of the house of representatives, one of whom shall be appointed for a term of one  
30 year, one of whom shall be appointed for a term of two (2) years and one of whom shall be  
31 appointed for a term of three (3) years; and three (3) of whom shall be appointed by the president  
32 of the senate, one of whom shall be appointed for a term of one year, one of whom shall be  
33 appointed for a term of two (2) years and one of whom shall be appointed for a term of three (3)  
34 years.

1           (b) The chair of the commission shall be elected from among the membership by the  
2 commission members. In the event of the absence or disability of the chairperson, the members  
3 of the commission shall elect a temporary chairperson by a majority vote of those present and  
4 voting.

5           (c) Should any member cease to be an officer or employee of the unit or agency they are  
6 appointed to represent, their membership on the commission shall terminate immediately. Any  
7 vacancy on the commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

8           (d) Ten (10) members of the commission shall constitute a quorum.

9           **42-159-4. Terms of office.**

10          The members shall serve until their successors are appointed and qualified.

11          **42-159-5. Purpose.**

12          The commission is created and established to identify, evaluate, and provide  
13 recommendations to assist nationally and internationally recognized sailing and marine events,  
14 both amateur and professional, and to attract and encourage activity in Rhode Island. In addition,  
15 the commission shall advise state and local leaders on the suitability and practicality of hosting  
16 qualified marine events in the state.

17          **42-159-6. Authority.**

18          (a) The commission is authorized to accept and empowered to accept and expend funds  
19 made available by the United States government or any agency thereof, in order to carry out the  
20 commission's efforts to manage financial support for sailing events. In coordination with the  
21 Rhode Island Sailing Foundation, the commission is authorized to solicit grants and charitable  
22 funds or in-kind contributions from public and private individuals and organizations to fund  
23 projects and programs. The proceeds of grants received shall be paid to the general treasurer of  
24 the state and be deposited by them in a separate fund to be utilized for the purposes of those  
25 grants, and in the manner and degree as shall be deemed to be in the best interest of the state.

26          (b) The allocation of any funds received shall be decided by a majority vote of voting  
27 members in attendance at a meeting duly convened for the conduct of business by the  
28 commission.

29          SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT - RHODE ISLAND SAILING  
EVENTS COMMISSION

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1           This act would create the Rhode Island Sailing Events Commission in order to attract  
2 amateur and professional marine events in Rhode Island. The commission would advise state and  
3 local leaders on the suitability of hosting such activities.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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