SECTION 1. Findings.

Whereas, the Roger Williams Park Zoo brings in over half a million visitors each year, including over two hundred thousand (200,000) visitors from out of state, contributing to over fifty million dollars ($50,000,000) in economic impact for Roger Williams Park, the city of Providence and the state of Rhode Island; and

Whereas, the Roger Williams Park Zoo hosted nearly five thousand (5,000) Rhode Island students for educational programs during and after school in 2018, and provided free and reduced entry to ensure that students of all backgrounds had access to these camps and programs.

Whereas, unlike many zoos nationwide that receive dedicated state or local revenues, the Roger Williams Park Zoo relies on entry fees and memberships for capital improvements.

Whereas, Rhode Island voters approved fifteen million dollars ($15,000,000) for the Zoo as part of the 2014 “Clean Water, Open Space and Healthy Communities” bond, which the Zoo used promptly to build a brand new “Faces of the Rainforest” exhibit. The exhibit brought an estimated thirty-six thousand six hundred fifty-seven (36,657) additional visitors to the Zoo in the first year and demonstrated a positive return on investment by contributing fifteen million six hundred fifty thousand dollars ($15,650,000) in direct value to the local and state economy.

Whereas, the Zoo administration has collected over two thousand (2,000) signatures from Rhode Island residents across the state on a petition requesting to put a bond question on the 2020 ballot that would seek bond funding for a new state-of-the-art visitor entrance to the zoo.
SECTION 2. Proposition to be submitted to the people.

At the general election to be held on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November 2020, there shall be submitted to the people ("people") of the state of Rhode Island ("state"). For their approval or rejection, the following proposition:

"Shall the action of the general assembly, by an act passed at the January 2020 session, authorizing the issuance of bonds, refunding bonds, and temporary notes of the state of Rhode Island for the capital project and in the amount with respect to the project listed below be approved, and the issuance of bonds, refunding bonds, and temporary notes authorized in accordance with the provisions of said act?"

Approval of this question will allow the state of Rhode Island to issue general obligation bonds, refunding bonds, and/or temporary notes in an amount not to exceed forty million dollars ($40,000,000) for a full renovation of the Roger Williams Park Zoo visitor entrance featuring new ocean-themed exhibits. This project will increase economic impacts on Roger Williams Park, the city of Providence and all of Rhode Island.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect when and if the state board of elections shall certify to the secretary of state that a majority of the qualified electors voting on the proposition contained in section 2 hereof have indicated their approval of all or any projects thereunder.