

2021 -- H 5937

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF THE
TRAUMA INFLICTED ON CHILDREN WHO ARE EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE

Introduced By: Representatives Ranglin-Vassell, Fogarty, Kislak, Hull, Ajello, Alzate,
Barros, and Henries

Date Introduced: February 25, 2021

Referred To: House Health & Human Services

1 WHEREAS, An estimated 10 million U.S. children are exposed to domestic violence
2 each year; and

3 WHEREAS, Rates of partner violence are higher among couples with children than those
4 without children; and

5 WHEREAS, In Rhode Island in 2016 (the most recent year for which full data are
6 available), police reports indicate that children were present at 27 percent of domestic violence
7 incidents resulting in arrests. However, that number is but a small percentage of the number of
8 children affected by violence due to myriad additional situations of children's connection with
9 violence that goes unidentified, undocumented, and untreated; and

10 WHEREAS, The impact of violence on children who see or hear non-domestic acts of
11 violence, or who have lost family members or friends through non-domestic acts of violence, or
12 whose friends have lost family members through acts of violence, often live day-to-day in fear of
13 ongoing violence in their communities; and

14 WHEREAS, The effect and consequences of this violence on our children's lives both
15 emotionally and educationally must be recorded and evaluated, and methods of healing these
16 often unseen wounds must be comprehensive and collectively available in our schools and our
17 communities; now, therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created
19 consisting of thirteen (13) members; three (3) of whom shall be members of the Rhode Island

1 House of Representatives, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by
2 the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of RI Kids Count, or
3 designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Corrections, or
4 designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services,
5 or designee; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of the Providence Student Union, or
6 designee; one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island Association of School
7 Principals, or designee; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters
8 of the Ocean State, or designee; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of Rhode Islanders
9 Sponsoring Education, or designee; one of whom shall be the Regional Director of D.A.R.E., or
10 designee; one of whom shall be the President of the Ministers Alliance of Rhode Island, or
11 designee; and one of whom shall be the Executive Director of the Institute for the Study and
12 Practice of Non-Violence, or designee.

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

18 The purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study and provide
19 recommendations on the impact of the trauma inflicted on children who are exposed to violence
20 including:

- 21 (1) Methodology to identify and quantify children exposed to all types of violence;
- 22 (2) Methods to measure the scope of problem, including geographic and monetary
23 influences;
- 24 (3) Resultant behaviors, academic setbacks, and long-term outcome from children's
25 exposure to violence; and
- 26 (4) Policy and program options to improve the negative effects of violence on children.

27 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at
28 the call of the Speaker of the House and organize and shall select a chairperson from among the
29 legislators.

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

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

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

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

3 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the
4 House of Representatives no later than February 8, 2022, and said commission shall expire on
5 May 8, 2022.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
HOUSE RESOLUTION
CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF THE
TRAUMA INFLICTED ON CHILDREN WHO ARE EXPOSED TO VIOLENCE

- 1 This resolution would create a thirteen (13) member special legislative study commission
- 2 whose purpose it would be to study the impact of the trauma inflicted on children who are
- 3 exposed to violence, and who would report back to the House of Representatives no later than
- 4 February 8, 2022, and whose life would expire on May 8, 2022.

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