

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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

Introduced By: Senators Cano, Bell, Quezada, Picard, Mack, Calkin, and Pearson

Date Introduced: March 01, 2022

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

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 Senate, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the President of  
2 the Senate; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of RI Kids Count, or designee; one of  
3 whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Corrections, or designee; one of  
4 whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services, or designee; one  
5 of whom shall be the Executive Director of the Providence Student Union, or designee; one of  
6 whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island Association of School Principals, or designee;  
7 one of whom shall be the Executive Director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Ocean State, or  
8 designee; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of Rhode Islanders Sponsoring Education,  
9 or designee; one of whom shall be the Regional Director of D.A.R.E., or designee; one of whom  
10 shall be the President of the Ministers Alliance of Rhode Island, or designee; and one of whom  
11 shall be the Executive Director of the Institute for the Study and Practice of Non-Violence, or  
12 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 President of the Senate 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 Joint Committee on Legislative Services is hereby authorized and directed to provide  
2 suitable quarters for said commission; and be it further

3           RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the  
4 Senate no later than February 8, 2023, and said commission shall expire on May 8, 2023.

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