SENATE RESOLUTION

THAT THIS SENATE HEREBY ENCOURAGES AND SUPPORTS THE EFFORTS OF THE RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION TO LOCATE A NURSING EDUCATION CENTER AT THE SOUTH STREET POWER STATION IN PROVIDENCE

Introduced By: Senator Daniel DaPonte

Date Introduced: July 03, 2013

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

WHEREAS, Rhode Island College (the College), the University of Rhode Island (the University), and the Community College of Rhode Island provide high-quality, public nursing education and research programs, which produce approximately 80% of the state's nursing program graduates each year; and

WHEREAS, The facilities housing the nursing programs at the College and the University are aging, lack current technologies and smart classrooms, and are at their physical enrollment capacities; and

WHEREAS, Projected local and national shortages of nursing candidates for licensure and nursing faculty are expected to adversely impact the delivery of health care in the coming years; and

WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of the State of Rhode Island to enable the University and the College to educate students at all levels in the sciences and caring for complex health care challenges in a low-risk environment, to provide critical continuing education in order to support workforce development, and to produce more nursing graduates at the baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral levels; and

WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of the State of Rhode Island to pursue cost-effective financing for its public nursing higher education facilities as outlined in the May 23, 2011, feasibility study authorized by the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island in the fiscal
WHEREAS, Location of a shared facility in Providence's Jewelry District will allow the College and the University to maximize symmetries and current collaborations with Brown University's Alpert Medical School (AMS), and the state's major hospitals and other health care providers; and

WHEREAS, A shared nursing education facility would be an investment by the citizens of Rhode Island that will provide Rhode Island students, and particularly students from the urban area in which the new nursing school will be located, with programs to encourage the pursuit of careers in nursing, increased opportunities to attend the College and the University to pursue nursing education, and financial and other assistance to facilitate nursing program completion; and

WHEREAS, Brown University and the AMS have proposed to enhance the connection of College Hill to the Jewelry District and create a campus environment on and around the Alpert Medical School; and

WHEREAS, Brown University and the AMS are eager to promote academic collaborations with the University, the College, and other institutions of higher education; and

WHEREAS, Brown University has proposed a collaboration with Commonwealth Ventures, LLC (the Developer) to renovate and develop the South Street Power Station at Davol Square into a shared facility sufficient to house Brown's administrative programming, and the nursing programs for the University and the College; and

WHEREAS, In order to address the projected shortage of new nurses, to attract more nursing faculty, to provide state-of-the-art technology for teaching and research capabilities, and to ensure cost-effective development of higher education facilities, the Board of Education and the Department of Administration intend to work together to enter into a partnership with Brown University and Commonwealth Ventures, LLC, to locate a Nursing Education Center (“NEC”) to be shared by the College and the University in the South Street Power Station; and

WHEREAS, A major vehicle making the development of the abandoned and vacant South Street Power Station possible is the State's historic preservation tax credit program intended to support a previously planned use of the building and now potentially helping to enable the building to serve, in part, a beneficial State purpose; and

WHEREAS, The Developer has proposed that with the South Street Power Station leased in its entirety by Brown and the NEC, the developer will privately develop at least one hundred sixty five thousand (165,000) square feet of residential apartments suitable for rent by graduate,
medical, and upper-class advanced undergraduate student housing on the adjacent parcel; at least
ten thousand (10,000) square feet of retail space; a six hundred (600) car garage (to be financed
and developed by the City of Providence) on property leased by Brown University; and will
develop at least fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet of incubator lab space in an adjacent
facility; and

WHEREAS, The Developer anticipates the development of the NEC project in its
entirety will launch a $206 million economic development project that will generate local
construction and other permanent jobs, and enhance a major gateway to Providence; and

WHEREAS, After analysis, the annual lease costs for the NEC in the South Street Power
Station project represent the lowest cost alternative for this type of project, without the additional
long term burden of ownership; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Education, the University, the College, and the Department of
Administration intend to negotiate the terms and conditions for the development and lease for the
NEC in the South Street Power Station with the Developer to protect the short and long-term
interests of the State, the College, and the University; and

WHEREAS, A shared governance committee for operational purposes will be established
as outlined in the feasibility study, and will be comprised of appropriate and equal numbers of
individuals from the University and the College and chaired by a senior staff member of the
Board of Education, with a process whereby the appeal of decisions made by the governance
committee may be made by the University or College directly to the Board; and

WHEREAS, Decisions regarding the NEC that involve and impact both the University
and College nursing programs shall not be made by either the University or College alone; now,
therefore be it

RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby encourages and
supports the efforts of the Rhode Island Board of Education and the Department of
Administration to locate a nursing education center "(NEC)" at the South Street Power Station in
Providence; and be it further

RESOLVED, That in the event that the State Properties Committee and/or the Board of
Education approves a lease with good, clear and marketable title to said property for the NEC, it
shall immediately forward the proposed lease to the Chair of the Finance Committee of the
Senate of the State of Rhode Island, for approval in accordance with subsection 37-6-2(d); and be
it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Governor, the Chair of the Board of
Education, the Director of the Department of Administration, the State Budget Officer, and the Chairman of the State Properties Committee.