

**2019 -- H 6063**

LC002236

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019**

**H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N**

**CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE STUDY COMMISSION TO STUDY AND PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE METHOD AND NECESSARY PROCEDURES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RHODE ISLAND'S ACTION PLAN TO STAND UP TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

Introduced By: Representatives Cortvriend, Blazewski, Williams, Almeida, and Diaz

Date Introduced: May 03, 2019

Referred To: House Environment and Natural Resources

1           WHEREAS, Climate change is considered one the most serious threats to the future  
2 health, well-being, and economic security of the people of Rhode Island; and

3           WHEREAS, Rhode Island is already experiencing climate change and the impacts are  
4 placing communities, coastlines, forests, and aging, vulnerable infrastructure at risk; and

5           WHEREAS, It is essential to the safety and well-being of all Rhode Islanders that  
6 agencies of this State are prepared to keep both the citizens and the State's 400 miles of coastline  
7 safe from the progression and effects of climate change; and

8           WHEREAS, The much-heralded Resilient Rhode Island Act was passed in 2014  
9 establishing the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) and emphasized the  
10 concept of resilience, building on our collective strength to develop practical solutions that allow  
11 Rhode Island to "weather the storm"; and

12           WHEREAS, Governor Gina Raimondo enacted the Action Plan to Stand up to Climate  
13 Change in September of 2017 by Executive Order and appointed a Chief Resilience officer to  
14 drive climate resilience efforts across the state, both within government and in collaboration with  
15 business, academic and nonprofit partners, with the mission to develop a statewide Climate  
16 Resilience Action Strategy; and

17           WHEREAS, In an effort to produce an inclusive plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions  
18 and adapt to the projected effects of climate change, 61 recommended Actions were constructed

1 by the 54 member working group that consisted of 13 Agencies, 8 State-wide organizations, and  
2 three Research Institutions, during 10 roundtables which included more than 350 participants; and

3 WHEREAS, Resilient Rhody is about actions we can take to protect our infrastructure  
4 and our natural resources, strengthen our economy, preserve the health of our environment, and  
5 keep Rhode Islanders safe; and

6 WHEREAS, Resilient Rhody is also about strengthening collaboration between state  
7 agencies, municipalities, and community groups throughout Rhode Island. To overcome climate  
8 challenges now and in the future, we must work together; and

9 WHEREAS, Climate resilience, as defined by Resilient Rhody is "the capacity of  
10 individuals, institutions, businesses, and natural systems within Rhode Island to survive, adapt,  
11 and grow no matter what chronic stresses and weather events they experience"; and

12 WHEREAS, To move these vital Actions forward will require "sustained energy and  
13 resources from key strategy development stakeholders"; now, therefore be it

14 RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created  
15 consisting of sixteen (16) members: five (5) of whom shall be members of the House of  
16 Representatives, three (3) of whom shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House, and two (2)  
17 of whom shall be appointed by the Minority Leader; one of whom shall be the General Treasurer,  
18 or designee; one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns,  
19 or designee; one of whom shall be the Chair of Board of Directors of the Rhode Island  
20 Infrastructure Bank, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of RI Department of  
21 Environmental Management, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Department  
22 of Health, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of RIDOT, or designee; two (2) of  
23 whom shall be members of the Environmental Council of Rhode Island, to be appointed by the  
24 President of the Council; one of whom shall be an expert from the property insurance industry, to  
25 be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be a professor or designated student  
26 from the Metcalf Institute of Marine and Environmental Reporting at the University of Rhode  
27 Island, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and one of whom shall be the Chair of  
28 Providence Racial and Environmental Justice Committee, or designee.

29 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a permanent advisory  
30 commission, a legislative study commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly  
31 resolution, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu  
32 of a legislator, provided that the majority leader or the minority leader of the political party which  
33 is entitled to the appointment consent to the member of the general public.

34 The purpose of said commission shall be to study and make recommendations on the

1 methods and procedures for the implementation of Rhode Island's Action Plan to Stand Up to  
2 Climate Change including identification of sources and methods of funding and financing,  
3 methods to track and evaluate the implementation progress and performance, identification of  
4 actions and investments ready for implementation in the near-term, and determining how to best  
5 equitably reduce the burden of climate change impacts with particular attention to communities  
6 across the state who have been disproportionately burdened by multiple sources of pollution and  
7 social vulnerabilities (environmental justice communities).

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

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

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

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

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

18           RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the  
19 Speaker of the House no later than April 15, 2020, and said commission shall expire on May 15,  
20 2020.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N

CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE STUDY COMMISSION TO STUDY AND  
PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE METHOD AND NECESSARY PROCEDURES  
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RHODE ISLAND'S ACTION PLAN TO STAND UP TO  
CLIMATE CHANGE

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1           This resolution would create a sixteen (16) member special legislative commission whose  
2 purpose it would be to make a comprehensive study of the methods and procedures for the  
3 implementation of Rhode Island's Action Plan to Stand Up to Climate Change, and who would  
4 report back to the House no later than April 15, 2020, and whose life would expire on May 15,  
5 2020.

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