2019 -- S 1038

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY
JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

SENATE RESOLUTION
CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF INSURER PAYMENTS ON ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Introduced By: Senator Joshua Miller

Date Introduced: June 28, 2019

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

WHEREAS, Rhode Islanders are often unable to access necessary medical, dental, and mental health care in a timely fashion; and
WHEREAS, A lack of sufficient access may contribute to over-utilization of emergency departments or to forcing Rhode Islanders to forgo health care; and
WHEREAS, An inability to access the appropriate care, from the appropriate provider in an appropriate setting, is negatively impacting the overall health status of Rhode Islanders; and
WHEREAS, Many dental and mental health professionals have historically not participated in contracts for services with the state’s health insurers, which amplifies the difficulty for Rhode Islanders to locate and receive appropriate mental health services; and
WHEREAS, The sufficiency of payments to providers for medical, dental, and mental health care may be negatively impacting the ability of Rhode Islanders to access appropriate care in appropriate settings; and
WHEREAS, These payment issues are not limited to commercial health insurers, but also impact Rhode Island’s Medicaid managed care as well; now, therefore be it
WHEREAS, The Senate Finance and Senate Health and Human Services Committees understand this to be a matter of utmost importance to Rhode Island public health policy; now, therefore be it”
RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby requests a study of the issue of health insurance payments for medical, dental, and mental health services to determine if the current payments
impact the state’s health insurer network adequacy and appropriate access to health care for Rhode Islanders; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission to study the impact of insurer payments on access to health care be and the same is hereby created to assist the work of the two Senate Committees, and this commission shall consist of fifteen (15) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the Rhode Island Senate, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; and twelve (12) of whom shall be members to be appointed by the President of the Senate, who may include, but need not be limited to, the state’s Health Insurance Commissioner, or designee; the Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, or designee; the President of the Rhode Island Medical Society, or designee; the President of the Dental Association of Rhode Island, or designee; a community-based psychiatrist; the President of the Rhode Island Community Health Center Association, or designee; the President of the Substance Use and Mental Health Leadership Association, or designee; at least two (2) representatives from commercial health insurers, including one insurer that is a Rhode Island Medicaid Managed Care Organization; at least one representative from a Rhode Island-based institution of higher education with appropriate expertise in public health; and a representative from the Hospital Association of Rhode Island.

In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a permanent advisory commission, a legislative study commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly resolution, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in place of a legislator, provided that the Senate President or the Minority Leader of the political party that is entitled to the appointment consents to the appointment of the member of the general public.

The purpose of said commission shall be to conduct a comprehensive review of health insurance payments for medical, dental, and mental health services to determine if the current payments impact the state’s health insurer network adequacy and appropriate access to health care for Rhode Islanders.

Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at the call of the Chair of the commission, who shall be appointed by the President of the Senate.

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

A quorum of the commission shall consist of a majority of its membership, and the membership of said commission shall receive no compensation for their services.

The commission shall assemble no less than four (4) times, or more often at the call of the Chair, upon written notice of each meeting stating the place, day, and time of the meeting, along with the purpose and/or agenda of the meeting.
All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish such advice and information, documentary and otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of this resolution.

The Joint Committee on Legislative Services is hereby authorized and directed to provide suitable quarters for said commission; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings, recommendations, and potential legislative proposals to the President of the Senate, the Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, and the Chair of the Senate Health and Human Service Committee, on or before January 31, 2020, and said commission shall expire on May 31, 2020.