

2023 -- H 5935

LC002041

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CREATING A SPECIAL AFFIRMATIVE ACTION LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO INCREASE DIVERSITY ON PROJECTS COVERED BY THE STATE PREVAILING WAGE RATE LAW

Introduced By: Representative Enrique George Sanchez

Date Introduced: March 01, 2023

Referred To: House Labor

1 WHEREAS, The State of Rhode Island has an obligation to develop a meaningful plan to
2 increase diversity on projects covered by the state prevailing wage rate law; and

3 WHEREAS, In order to provide a meaningful plan, a collaboration with the Department
4 of Education that would increase the availability of career and technical education in all RI school
5 districts, with an emphasis on construction and manufacturing related coursework is essential;
6 now, therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That a special Affirmative Action legislative task force be and the same is
8 hereby created consisting of eleven (11) members; three (3) of whom shall be members of the
9 House of Representatives, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by
10 the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary
11 Education, or designee; one of whom shall be a member of the Affirmative Action Taskforce, to
12 be appointed by the Director of Department of Labor and Training; one of whom shall be the
13 Executive Director of Black Lives Matter, or designee; one of whom shall be the Executive
14 Director of Women in Trades, or designee; two (2) of whom shall be members of community-
15 based organizations, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and two (2) of whom shall be
16 persons experienced in heavy road construction, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House.

17 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a legislative study
18 commission, or any commission or task force created by a General Assembly resolution, the
19 appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu of a legislator,

1 provided that the majority leader or the minority leader of the political party which is entitled to
2 the appointment consents to the member of the general public.

3 The purpose of said Affirmative Action task force shall be to develop recommendations
4 to increase diversity on projects covered by the prevailing wage rate law that provide an action
5 plan of the steps necessary to increase the availability of career and technical education in all RI
6 school districts, with an emphasis on construction and manufacturing related coursework and a
7 plan for graduation placement including;

8 • Interviews with current and inactive apprentices of color and women to look at barriers
9 from their perspective;

10 • Review of best practices in apprenticeship and diversity including tools, templates,
11 technologies and ideas;

12 • Methods to strengthen agency enforcement of Equal Employment Opportunity
13 obligations;

14 • Avenues to provide information and pre-apprenticeships technical assistance to JATCs;

15 • Projected goals and statistics on apprenticeship completion rates, termination rates and
16 other information by gender and ethnicity;

17 • Methods to establish collaboration with state and local contracting agencies and
18 stakeholders to develop diversity expectations, rewards and sanctions that are expressed in all
19 future public works projects;

20 • Estimates and potential sources for adequate funding to undertake the research and plan
21 development required to support the execution of a diversity plan on projects subject to the State's
22 prevailing wage law;

23 • Recommendations to develop and deliver a statewide support/mentoring/ombudsperson
24 program for tradesmen and women of color;

25 • Evaluate options and methods to replace the current requirement in public contracting
26 with "Best Value Contracting" i.e. evaluating bidders on public contracts primarily on the basis of
27 lowest bid vs. Best Value Contracting that awards points or otherwise favors a number of societal
28 factors and can include factors such as participation in an apprenticeship program; percentage of
29 local residents in a contractor's workforce; affirmative action program or supporting diversity in
30 the workplace; or a variety of other factors; and

31 • A statewide collaborative annual review of the action plan to validate subsequent
32 recommendations in order to identify the best position to implement them.

33 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the special Affirmative Action
34 legislative task force shall meet at the call of the Speaker of the House and organize and shall

1 select a chairperson from among the members.

2 Vacancies in said task force shall be filled in like manner as the original appointment.

3 The membership of said task force shall receive no compensation for their services.

4 All departments and agencies of the state, shall furnish such advice and information,
5 documentary and otherwise, to said task force and its agents as is deemed necessary or desirable
6 by the said task force to facilitate the purposes of this resolution.

7 The Speaker of the House is hereby authorized and directed to provide suitable quarters
8 for said task force; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That the special Affirmative Action legislative task force shall report its
10 findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives no later than February 7, 2024,
11 and said commission shall expire on May 7, 2025.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
HOUSE RESOLUTION
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DEVELOP A PLAN TO INCREASE DIVERSITY ON PROJECTS COVERED BY THE
STATE PREVAILING WAGE RATE LAW

- 1 This resolution creates a eleven (11) member Affirmative Action legislative special task
- 2 force to study and provide recommendations to increase diversity on projects covered by the state
- 3 prevailing wage rate law, and who would report back to the House of Representatives on or
- 4 before February 7, annually, and would expire on May 7, 2025.

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