

**2023 -- H 5502 SUBSTITUTE A**

LC000986/SUB A

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023**

**JOINT RESOLUTION**

**CREATING A SPECIAL JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY AND PROVIDE  
RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES FROM PLASTIC BOTTLE WASTE**

Introduced By: Representatives McEntee, Bennett, Cortvriend, Knight, Caldwell,  
McGaw, Fogarty, Potter, Cruz, and Kislak

Date Introduced: February 10, 2023

Referred To: House Environment and Natural Resources

1           WHEREAS, Plastic pollution is dangerous to the health of our oceans, harms our marine  
2 species, contributes to climate change, and is a major component of unsightly litter both on our  
3 lands and in our waters; and

4           WHEREAS, Rhode Island is on a path towards achieving net-zero carbon emission and  
5 reducing our plastic refuse; and

6           WHEREAS, Plastics are found throughout our environment from street drains to  
7 waterways; and

8           WHEREAS, It is in the best interests of the health, safety, and welfare of residents and  
9 visitors to Rhode Island to protect our environment and natural resources from plastic waste;  
10 now, therefore be it

11           RESOLVED, That a special joint legislative commission be and the same is hereby  
12 created consisting of eighteen (18) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the Senate,  
13 not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the President of the  
14 Senate; and three (3) of whom shall be members of the House, not more than two (2) from the  
15 same political party, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the  
16 Director of the Department of Environmental Management, or designee; one of whom shall be  
17 the Director of Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation, or designee; one of whom shall be  
18 the Executive Director of Save the Bay, or designee; one of whom shall be the Executive Director  
19 of Clean Water Action, or designee; one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island

1 Beverage Association, or designee; one of whom shall be from the Rhode Island Alcohol  
2 Beverage Distributors, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the  
3 Executive Director of the Rhode Island Food Dealers, or designee; one of whom shall be the  
4 President and CEO of the National Beer Wholesalers, or designee; one of whom shall be from the  
5 Rhode Island Liquor Collaborative, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom  
6 shall be the Executive Director of the RI Audubon Society, or designee; one of whom shall be a  
7 Rhode Island attorney who specializes in environmental law, to be appointed by the Speaker of  
8 the House; and one of whom shall be a representative from a local convenience store, to be  
9 appointed by the President of the Senate.

10 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a legislative study  
11 commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly resolution, the appointing  
12 authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu of a legislator, provided that  
13 the majority leader or the minority leader of the political party which is entitled to the  
14 appointment consents to the member of the general public.

15 The purpose of said commission shall include, but not be limited to:

16 A comprehensive study on the issues with current practices for recycling of plastic  
17 bottles, miniature alcoholic beverage containers, and single-use plastic packaging;

18 · Identify pathways to improve the state's ability to address and recycle plastic bottles,  
19 miniature alcoholic beverage containers, and single-use plastic packaging;

20 · Compare container deposit programs and extender producer responsibility recycling  
21 programs, including their methods and administration, that rely on state administration with those  
22 that utilize third-party nonprofit entity administration;

23 · Waste diversion;

24 · Provide recommendations for market-based recycling opportunities for plastic bottles  
25 and miniature alcoholic beverage containers; and

26 · Review and evaluate refund balances on bottle utilization.

27 By September 1, 2023, upon passage of the joint resolution, the members of the joint  
28 legislative commission shall meet at the call of the Speaker of the House and the President of the  
29 Senate to organize and shall select two (2) co-chairpersons from among the 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 General Assembly no later than June 10, 2024, and said commission shall expire on June 30,  
5 2024.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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

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RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL  
RESOURCES FROM PLASTIC BOTTLE WASTE

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- 1           This resolution would create an eighteen (18) member special joint legislative  
2           commission whose purpose it would be to study and provide recommendations to protect our  
3           environment from plastic bottle waste, and who would report back to the General Assembly no  
4           later than June 10, 2024, and whose life would expire on June 30, 2024.

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