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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

JOINT RESOLUTION

CREATING A SPECIAL JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY SLUDGE
MANAGEMENT IN RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Cortvriend, Noret, and Phillips

Date Introduced: February 06, 2026

Referred To: House Environment and Natural Resources

1 WHEREAS, "Sludge" is defined as any solid, semisolid or liquid waste generated from a
2 municipal, commercial, or industrial wastewater treatment plant, water supply treatment plant, or
3 air pollution control facility or any other such waste having similar characteristics and effects;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Effective sludge management is essential to reduce the massive volumes of
6 waste generated by wastewater treatment, mitigate severe environmental contamination
7 (groundwater and soil), and eliminate pathogens in order to protect public health; now, therefore
8 be it

9 RESOLVED, That a special joint legislative commission be and the same is hereby
10 created consisting of nineteen (19) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the House of
11 Representatives, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the
12 Speaker of the House; three (3) of whom shall be members of the Senate, not more than two (2)
13 from the same political party, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom shall
14 be a member of the Rhode Island Clean Water Association (RICWA), to be appointed by the
15 Chair of the Board of Directors for the RICWA; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of
16 the Narragansett Bay Commission (NBC), or designee; one of whom shall be the Executive
17 Director of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, or designee; one of
18 whom shall be the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation, or
19 designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Administration

1 Division of Planning, or designee; one of whom shall be a representative of a treatment facility
2 that composts, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; two (2) of whom shall be
3 representatives of Rhode Island communities that have incinerators, one of whom to be appointed
4 by the Speaker of the House, and one of whom to be appointed by the President of the Senate;
5 one of whom shall be a representative of a Rhode Island community that is shipping its sludge to
6 a landfill in Ohio, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom shall be the
7 Executive Director of the North East Biosolids & Residuals Association (NEBRA), or designee;
8 one of whom shall be a professor from the University of Rhode Island and/or Brown University
9 conversant in sludge processing, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall
10 be an end user of biosolids (such as a turf farm or golf course), to be appointed by the President
11 of the Senate; and one of whom shall be a representative of a private company involved in
12 biosolids management, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House.

13 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a permanent advisory
14 commission, a legislative study commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly
15 resolution, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu
16 of a legislator.

17 The purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study and review of
18 the current state of sludge management in Rhode Island (from the 19 facilities treating over 120
19 million gallons of wastewater every day and including septage) in order to understand and
20 provide recommendations regarding the effects of decreasing outlets, including the cost to
21 ratepayers and environmental and climate impacts, and to also identify potential state-wide
22 solutions and future opportunities to make sludge management more sustainable in Rhode Island.

23 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at
24 the call of the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate and organize and shall select a
25 Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, one of whom shall be a member of the House and one of
26 whom shall be a member of the Senate.

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

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

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

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

34 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the

- 1 General Assembly no later than January 5, 2027, and said commission shall expire on March 5,
- 2 2027.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
JOINT RESOLUTION
CREATING A SPECIAL JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY SLUDGE
MANAGEMENT IN RHODE ISLAND

1 This resolution would create a nineteen (19) member special joint legislative commission
2 whose purpose it would be to study and provide recommendations for effective sludge
3 management, and who would report back to the General Assembly on or before January 5, 2027,
4 and whose life would expire on March 5, 2027.

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