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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

JOINT RESOLUTION

CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY SAFE STAFFING
RATIOS IN HOSPITALS

Introduced By: Senator Melissa A. Murray

Date Introduced: January 16, 2026

Referred To: Senate Health & Human Services

1 RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created
2 consisting of fifteen (15) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the House, not more
3 than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; three (3)
4 of whom shall be members of the Senate, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to
5 be appointed by the President of the Senate; two (2) of whom shall be representatives of hospital
6 direct staff, one from an acute care hospital and one from a specialty hospital, one to be appointed
7 by the Speaker of the House, and one to be appointed by the President of the Senate; two (2) of
8 whom shall be representatives of hospital administrators, one to be appointed by the Speaker of
9 the House, and one to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom shall be the
10 Director of the RI Department of Health, or designee; one of whom shall be the Rhode Island
11 Attorney General, or designee; one of whom shall be a representative of a patient advocacy
12 organization, to be appointed jointly by the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate; and
13 two (2) of whom shall be representatives of a labor organization representing hospital workers,
14 one to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, and one to be appointed by the President of the
15 Senate.

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

19 The purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study and provide

1 recommendations to the General Assembly regarding safe staffing ratios in hospitals, including
2 but not limited to:

3 The impact of staffing on patient outcomes and safety;

4 The effect of staffing ratios on workforce recruitment and retention;

5 The financial and operational implications for hospitals and the State;

6 A review of best practices and models from other states; and

7 An evaluation of how Rhode Island hospitals are implementing new national staffing
8 standards, including the Joint Commission's 2026 National Performance Goal on nurse staffing,
9 and whether additional state-level policies or oversight mechanisms are needed to ensure
10 compliance, patient safety, and workforce stability.

11 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at
12 the call of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House and organize, and shall elect
13 one legislative member from the House and one legislative member from the Senate, one of
14 whom shall serve as chairperson and one of whom shall serve as vice-chairperson.

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

16 The membership of said commission shall receive no compensation for their services and
17 no reimbursement for expenses.

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

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

23 RESOLVED, That the commission shall provide quarterly progress reports to the House
24 of Representatives and the Senate beginning on March 31, 2026, and shall submit a final report of
25 its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly on or before March 31, 2027, and said
26 commission shall expire on June 30, 2027.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
JOINT RESOLUTION
CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY SAFE STAFFING
RATIOS IN HOSPITALS

- 1 This resolution would create a fifteen (15) member special legislative commission whose
2 purpose it would be to make a comprehensive study and provide recommendations for safe
3 staffing ratios in hospitals, who would report back to the General Assembly on or before March
4 31, 2027, and said commission would expire on June 30, 2027.

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