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LC004295  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

J O I N T   R E S O L U T I O N

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

Introduced By: Senators Murray, Ciccone, Tikoian, Dimitri, Thompson, Appollonio,  
Burke, Patalano, Urso, and Vargas

Date Introduced: January 23, 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 Rhode Island  
3     House of Representatives, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by  
4     the Speaker of the House; three (3) of whom shall be members of the Rhode Island Senate, not  
5     more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the President of the Senate;  
6     two (2) of whom shall be representatives of hospital direct care staff, one of which shall be from a  
7     specialty hospital (such as psychiatric, rehabilitation, of birthing), with one to be appointed by the  
8     Speaker of the House, and one of whom to be appointed by the President of the Senate; two (2) of  
9     whom shall be hospital administrators, one of whom to be appointed by the Speaker of the  
10    House, and one of whom to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom shall be the  
11    Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health, or designee; one of whom shall be the Rhode  
12    Island Attorney General, or designee; one of whom shall be a representative from a patient  
13    advocacy organization, to be appointed jointly by the Speaker of the House and the President of  
14    the Senate; and two (2) of whom shall be representatives of labor unions representing hospital  
15    workers, one of whom to be appointed by the Speaker of the House, and one of whom to be  
16    appointed by the President of the Senate.

17           In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a legislative study  
18    commission, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu  
19    of a legislator.

1           The purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study and provide  
2   recommendations to the General Assembly regarding safe staffing ratios in hospitals, including,  
3   but not limited to:

- 4           •       The impact of staffing levels on patient outcomes and safety;
- 5           •       The effect of staffing ratios on workforce recruitment and retention;
- 6           •       The financial and operational implications for hospitals and the state;
- 7           •       A review of best practices and models from other states; and
- 8           •       An evaluation of how Rhode Island hospitals are implementing new national  
9   staffing standards, including the Joint Commission’s 2026 National Performance Goal on nurse  
10   staffing, and whether additional state-level policies or oversight mechanisms are needed to ensure  
11   compliance, patient safety, and workforce stability.

12           Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at  
13   the call of the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, and organize and shall select  
14   a chairperson and vice-chairperson, one of whom shall be a member of the House and one of  
15   whom shall be a member of the Senate.

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

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

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

22           The Joint Committee on Legislative Services is hereby authorized and directed to provide  
23   suitable quarters, staff and clerical support for said commission; and be it further

24           RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its progress quarterly to the General  
25   Assembly beginning on September 1, 2026, and shall submit a final report with findings and  
26   recommendations to the General Assembly no later than September 1, 2027, and said commission  
27   shall expire on January 30, 2028.

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

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- 1           This resolution would create a fifteen (15) member special joint legislative study  
2   commission whose purpose would be to make a comprehensive study and provide  
3   recommendations to the General Assembly regarding safe staffing ratios in hospitals, and  
4   who would report back to the General Assembly on or before September 1, 2027, and  
5   whose life would expire on January 30, 2028.

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