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**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026**

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**J O I N T   R E S O L U T I O N**

**CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY AND PROVIDE  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CREATION OF A STATEWIDE TEACHER  
HEALTHCARE PLAN**

Introduced By: Senators DiPalma, Valverde, Ciccone, Tikoian, Gallo, and Urso

Date Introduced: March 04, 2026

Referred To: Senate Education

1           WHEREAS, Public school teachers are essential to the educational, economic, and civil  
2 wellbeing of the State of Rhode Island; and

3           WHEREAS, Access to affordable, quality healthcare is a critical component of recruiting,  
4 retaining, and supporting a stable and effective workforce; and

5           WHEREAS, Public school teacher health insurance coverage in Rhode Island is currently  
6 negotiated and administered on a district-by-district basis, resulting in significant disparities in  
7 coverage, cost-sharing, and access to care across municipalities; and

8           WHEREAS, A statewide healthcare plan for public school teachers in Rhode Island may  
9 offer opportunities to leverage economies of scale, standardize baseline benefits, promote equity  
10 among educators regardless of district, and provide greater predictability in education and  
11 municipal budgeting; now, therefore be it

12           RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created  
13 consisting of eleven (11) members: two (2) of whom shall be members of the Rhode Island House  
14 of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; two (2) of whom shall be  
15 members of the Rhode Island Senate, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of  
16 whom shall be the Commissioner of the Rhode Island Department of Education, or designee; one  
17 of whom shall be the Executive Director of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, or  
18 designee; one of whom shall be a municipal official, to be appointed by the President of the  
19 Senate; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of the Rhode Island School Superintendents

1 Association, or designee; one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island AFL-CIO, or  
2 designee; and two (2) of whom shall be representatives of labor unions representing public school  
3 teachers, one of whom to be appointed by the Executive Director of the National Education  
4 Association of Rhode Island, and one of whom to be appointed by the President of the Rhode  
5 Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals.

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

9 The purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study and provide  
10 recommendations to the General Assembly regarding the creation of a statewide teacher  
11 healthcare plan including, but not limited to:

- 12 ● The current structure of public school teacher health insurance coverage in Rhode  
13 Island, including costs, benefits, and administrative arrangements across school districts;
- 14 ● A review of best practices and models from other states;
- 15 ● Potential cost savings and efficiencies associated with a statewide plan, including  
16 impacts on state and municipal budgets;
- 17 ● The effects of a statewide plan on healthcare access, quality, and affordability;
- 18 ● Implications for collective bargaining rights and existing collective bargaining  
19 agreements;
- 20 ● The effect of healthcare premiums, out-of-pocket costs, and quality of coverage on  
21 workforce recruitment and retention;
- 22 ● The financial and operational implications for municipalities; and
- 23 ● An evaluation of any statutory or constitutional changes that may be required to  
24 implement a statewide teacher healthcare plan.

25 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at  
26 the call of the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate and organize and shall select  
27 a chairperson and vice-chairperson, one of whom shall be a member of the House and one of  
28 whom shall be a member of the Senate.

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

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

32 All departments and agencies of the state, municipalities, school districts, and other  
33 relevant stakeholders shall furnish such advice and information, documentary and otherwise, to  
34 said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or desirable by the commission to

1 facilitate the purpose of this resolution.

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

4           RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its progress quarterly to the General  
5 Assembly beginning on September 1, 2026, and shall submit a final report with findings and  
6 recommendations to the General Assembly on or before September 1, 2027, and said commission  
7 shall expire on December 31, 2027.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
JOINT RESOLUTION  
CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY AND PROVIDE  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CREATION OF A STATEWIDE TEACHER  
HEALTHCARE PLAN

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1           This resolution would create an eleven (11) member special legislative commission to  
2 study and provide recommendations for the creation of a statewide teacher healthcare plan, and  
3 who would report its progress quarterly to the General Assembly beginning on September 1,  
4 2026, and would submit a final report to the General Assembly on or before September 1, 2027,  
5 and would expire on December 31, 2027.

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