

2021 -- H 5925

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

HOUSE RESOLUTION

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THAT THE RHODE ISLAND CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION OBTAIN HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD) FUNDING TO PROVIDE FREE HIGH SPEED INTERNET ACCESS IN OUR PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITIES BY 2024

Introduced By: Representative Barbara Ann Fenton-Fung

Date Introduced: February 24, 2021

Referred To: House Innovation, Internet, & Technology

1 WHEREAS, In the 21st century, broadband Internet is a vitally important tool for
2 meeting telemedicine, smart city and the social and emotional needs of isolated seniors and those
3 with disabilities; and

4 WHEREAS, Only fifty-six percent of adults earning less than \$30,000 per year have
5 access to broadband Internet at home, compared to 94 percent for upper-income families, and
6 only eighteen percent of low-income adults have a device, computer, phone or tablet that can
7 access the Internet; and,

8 WHEREAS, Our public housing authorities have many individuals who, lacking access
9 to the Internet, currently have limited ability to interact with medical professionals, family and
10 friends, and to stay connected to their community and important social institutions such as
11 libraries and houses of worship; and

12 WHEREAS, Many residents of public housing are living on fixed incomes or are low-
13 wage earners. They struggle daily to provide themselves and their loved ones with the basic
14 necessities of life, and do not have the resources to access high speed Internet; and

15 WHEREAS, This lack of connectivity to the wider community leads to isolation and can
16 exacerbate depression, poorer health, and a reduced quality of life; now, therefore be it

17 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
18 respectfully requests that the Rhode Island Congressional delegation obtain Housing and Urban

1 Development (HUD) funding to provide high speed Internet access in our public housing
2 authorities by 2024; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
4 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable Senators Jack Reed and Sheldon
5 Whitehouse, and the Honorable Congressmen David Cicilline and James Langevin.

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