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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

SENATE RESOLUTION

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO ENDORSE THE
NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE BANK

Introduced By: Senators DiPalma, Ruggiero, Miller, Ciccone, and Euer

Date Introduced: January 19, 2021

Referred To: Senate Commerce

1 WHEREAS, The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) stated in its 2017 report
2 card that the United States received a grade of D+ regarding the current state of infrastructure and
3 that more than four and a half trillion dollars would be needed to restore the nation's
4 infrastructure to a state of good repair. Over two trillion dollars is currently not funded and the
5 remainder is inadequately funded. New 21st-century projects are also unfunded; and

6 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Section of ASCE gave the State a C- in its June, 2020,
7 report card. Among the grades were: Bridges D-, Drinking Water C+, Ports C, Rail B-, Roads D,
8 and Wastewater C. Forty-four percent of Rhode Island's gas lines are over 50 years old and
9 require repair and upgrade; twenty-two percent of Rhode Island's 779 bridges are structurally
10 deficient -- the worst in the nation; Rhode Island's share of rural roads in poor condition is also
11 worst in the nation; Providence Water, the largest treatment facility in New England, is almost
12 100 years old, and its distribution network shows higher lead concentrations than are permitted by
13 the EPA; and

14 WHEREAS, A new National Infrastructure Bank (NIB) could directly finance much of
15 the infrastructure of Rhode Island in partnership with state and local governments, the Rhode
16 Island Infrastructure Bank, and other institutions; it would also hire people who have lost their
17 jobs during the COVID pandemic; and

18 WHEREAS, The NIB is modeled on previous banks which helped build much of our
19 infrastructure under Presidents George Washington, James Madison, Abraham Lincoln, and

1 Franklin D. Roosevelt. The last such bank helped bring us out of the Depression and win WWII;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Congress introduced H.R. 6422, The National Infrastructure Bank Act of
4 2020, this spring to create a new National Infrastructure Bank. This legislation creates a \$4
5 trillion bank, authorized to invest in infrastructure projects only. It would require no new federal
6 spending and be capitalized by repurposing existing Treasury debt, as was done previously in
7 U.S. history; and

8 WHEREAS, The new National Infrastructure Bank will create twenty-five million new
9 high-paying jobs, pay Davis-Bacon wages, ensure Project Labor Agreements, and include Buy
10 American provisions. Disadvantaged Business Enterprises will be directly involved in building
11 the projects, and the bill mandates large-scale minority hiring. According to experts, the Bank
12 will grow the economy by 4-5 percent per year as did its predecessors; and

13 WHEREAS, Many organizations have issued endorsements. Seventeen state legislatures
14 have introduced or passed resolutions of support, as have county and city councils. Endorsements
15 include: The Providence, City Council, The National Congress of Black Women, the National
16 Association of Counties, the US High Speed Rail Association, the National Latino Farmers and
17 Ranchers, The American Sustainable Business Council, the National Association of Minority
18 Contractors, the National Federation of Federal Employees and many more organizations; now,
19 therefore be it

20 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby respectfully requests
21 the United States Congress to pass H.R. 6422, that would create a National Infrastructure Bank in
22 order to finance urgently needed infrastructure projects; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
24 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation,
25 Governor Gina Raimondo, and the President of the United States.

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