

2012 -- S 2438 AS AMENDED

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LC01711
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012

S E N A T E R E S O L U T I O N

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THAT THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION DESIGNATE THE PORTS OF RHODE ISLAND AS DESTINATION
PORTS AS PART OF THE CURRENT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
MARINE HIGHWAY SHIPPING PROGRAM

Introduced By: Senators Sosnowski, Sheehan, Walaska, Bates, and Goodwin

Date Introduced: February 16, 2012

Referred To: Senate Corporations

1 WHEREAS, United States Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has identified 18
2 marine corridors and designated six initiatives for further development as part of “America’s
3 Marine Highway Program”; and

4 WHEREAS, These all-water routes consist of 11 corridors that can serve as extensions of
5 the United States transportation system; and

6 WHEREAS, These corridors identify routes where water transportation presents an
7 opportunity to offer relief from landside traffic congestion, excessive air emissions, and other
8 environmental concerns or challenges; and

9 WHEREAS, In these corridors, Secretary LaHood has designated the nearby Port of New
10 Bedford as a Marine Highway Initiative; and

11 WHEREAS, In 2009, the Rhode Island General Assembly established a Special
12 Legislative Commission to Study Potential Economic Opportunities in the Development of Port
13 Facilities in Rhode Island, known as the “Port Commission,” and charged it with studying Rhode
14 Island’s port-related economy, with the intent of making specific recommendations to better
15 utilize Rhode Island’s coastal resources and unique geographic location to create employment
16 opportunities for Rhode Islanders during the worst economic downturn since the Great
17 Depression; and

18 WHEREAS, After completing three years of study, the Commission has learned that:

1 (1) The Port of Providence has received a \$10.5 million TIGER grant that will fund the
2 purchase and installation of two high performance harbor cranes which will enhance the port's
3 ability to continue its existing bulk material operations, while expanding its capabilities to
4 accommodate container operations;

5 (2) The Port of Davisville also received a \$22.3 million TIGER grant that will fund pier
6 and structural improvements, and install railroad track, ballast, and ties in the Pier 2 area, as well
7 as purchase a port crane; and

8 (3) These capital investments enable both facilities to better accommodate Marine
9 Highway cargo shipments; and

10 (4) The ports both have extensive rail interconnections into Rhode Island's \$230 million
11 Freight Rail Improvement Project; and

12 (5) The Port of Davisville also provides a 7,500-foot main runway with instrument
13 landing systems, making the facility truly intermodal; and

14 (6) The Port of Providence will post a 44-foot draft, capable of accepting most world-
15 scale cargo vessels; and

16 (7) Upon completion of its proposed dredging program, the Port of Davisville, the 5th
17 largest auto import facility in the U.S. specializing in RO-RO and ship channel, will post a 35-
18 foot draft, which will be enough to accommodate all current and future automotive ships; and

19 (8) ProvPort's 2008 cargo volume exceeded 3.1 million tons, ranking it second in New
20 England after Boston; and

21 (9) The Port of Davisville is a designated foreign trade zone (105) only eight nautical
22 miles from open water and is capable of handling other cargos, such as processed fish, and project
23 cargos, such as steel and wind energy components; and

24 (10) Both ports provide easy access for hinterland cargos as they are situated close to
25 major interstate arteries, including the state's \$600 million I-195/I-95 relocation and enhancement
26 project and the recently completed \$130 million Route 403 access highway to Routes 4 and I-95;
27 now, therefore be it

28 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
29 hereby requests that the United States Department of Transportation designate the Ports of Rhode
30 Island as destination ports as part of the current planning and implementation of the Marine
31 Highway Shipping Program, thus yielding additional federal funding and creating new jobs while
32 offering relief from landside traffic congestion, excessive air emissions, and other environmental
33 concerns; and be it further

34 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and he is hereby authorized and directed to

1 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood.

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