

2012 -- S 2439

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012

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SENATE RESOLUTION

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING CONGRESS TO 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 Sheehan, Walaska, Bates, Goodwin, and Ruggerio

Date Introduced: February 16, 2012

Referred To: Senate Corporations

1           WHEREAS, United States Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has identified 18  
2 marine corridor, 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 U.S. surface 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 other challenges; and

9           WHEREAS, In these corridors, United States Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has  
10 designated six “Marine Highway Initiatives” for further development, including the nearby Port  
11 of New Bedford; and

12           WHEREAS, These Marine Highway Initiatives will receive support from the Department  
13 of Transportation in the form of assistance in further developing the concepts through research,  
14 market analysis, and other efforts to identify opportunities; and

15           WHEREAS, These projects will help start new businesses and expand existing ones. The  
16 result will be more freight moving along America’s coastlines, reduction in air pollution and  
17 traffic congestion along surface corridors, and jobs for skilled mariners, shipbuilders, and  
18 individuals in other port-related industries; and

19           WHEREAS, In 2009, the Rhode Island General Assembly established a Special

1 Legislative Commission to Study Potential Economic Opportunities in the Development of Port  
2 Facilities in Rhode Island, known as the “Port Commission,” and charged it with studying Rhode  
3 Island’s Port-related economy, with the intent of making specific recommendations to better  
4 utilize Rhode Island’s coastal resources and unique geographic location to create employment  
5 opportunities for Rhode Islanders during the worst economic downturn since the Great  
6 Depression; and

7 WHEREAS, After completing three years of study, including 11 meetings, numerous  
8 visits to each and every commercial port in Rhode Island, and over 40 hours of expert testimony  
9 from 25 maritime witnesses, the Commission has learned that:

10 (a) The Port of Providence has received a \$10.5 million TIGER grant that will purchase  
11 and install two high performance harbor cranes which will enhance the port’s ability to continue  
12 its existing bulk material operations, while expanding its capabilities to accommodate container  
13 operations; and

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

17 (c) These capital investments enable both facilities to better accommodate Marine  
18 Highway cargo shipments; now, therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
20 hereby requests that our federal delegation become further involved as the U.S. Department of  
21 Transportation works towards implementation of the Marine Highway Shipping Program, to  
22 ensure that the U.S. Maritime Administration designates the Ports of Davisville and Providence  
23 as participants, thus yielding additional federal funding and creating new jobs; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and he hereby is authorized and directed to  
25 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the members of Rhode Island’s Congressional  
26 Delegation.

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