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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012

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

**CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO ASSESS THE EDUCATIONAL
NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITH READING DISABILITIES AND DYSLEXIA**

Introduced By: Senators Gallo, Goodwin, Paiva Weed, Lynch, and Ruggiero

Date Introduced: March 01, 2012

Referred To: Senate Education

1 RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created
2 consisting of twenty-one (21) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the Senate, not
3 more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the Senate President; three (3)
4 of whom shall be members of the House, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to
5 be appointed by the Speaker; two (2) of whom shall be parents of a child with diagnosed dyslexia,
6 one of whom shall be appointed by the Senate President, and one of whom shall be appointed by
7 the Speaker; one of whom shall be a licensed Rhode Island attorney, actively practicing in
8 education and/or special education law, to be appointed by the Speaker; one of whom shall be the
9 Chairman of the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education, or
10 designee; one of whom shall be a member of the Rhode Island State Literacy Team, to be
11 appointed by the Commissioner of the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary
12 Education; one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island Branch of the International
13 Dyslexia Association, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Children's Dyslexia
14 Center of Rhode Island, or designee; one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island
15 Association of Independent Schools, or designee; one of whom shall be the Chairperson for the
16 Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Council, or designee; one of whom shall be a member
17 of the Legal Services – Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, to be
18 appointed by the Commissioner of the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary
19 Education; one of whom shall be a reading research specialist from a Rhode Island University, to

1 be appointed by the Senate President; one of whom shall be a faculty member of a Rhode Island
2 institution of higher education with teacher pre-service programs, to be appointed by the chair of
3 the Rhode Island ~~Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education~~ [board of governors](#)
4 [for higher education](#); one of whom shall be a neuro-psychologist /evaluator from a Rhode Island
5 hospital, clinic or private practice, to be appointed by the Speaker; one of whom shall be a
6 psychologist with demonstrated expertise in reading acquisition and reading disabilities, to be
7 appointed by the Senate President; and one of whom shall be a developmental-behavioral
8 pediatrician with demonstrated expertise in diagnosis of reading disabilities, to be appointed by
9 the Speaker.

10 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a permanent advisory
11 commission, a legislative study commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly
12 resolution, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu
13 of a legislator, provided that the Majority Leader or the Minority Leader of the political party
14 which is entitled to the appointment, consents to the member of the general public.

15 The purpose of said commission shall be to conduct a comprehensive study of the
16 implications and consequences of dyslexia and to provide a comprehensive report with
17 recommendations to the General Assembly on the educational needs of children with reading
18 disabilities and dyslexia and all aspects of providing education to these children, including:

19 (1) Increasing awareness of dyslexia;

20 (2) Early assessment and identification of students with literacy challenges, including
21 dyslexia;

22 (3) A tiered continuum of intensity for research-based instructional interventions for
23 dyslexic students within the Response to Intervention model;

24 (4) Diagnosis, assessment, and progress monitoring procedures for students with reading
25 disabilities and dyslexia;

26 (5) Scientifically-validated interventions to address the needs of students with literacy
27 challenges, including dyslexia, consistent with guidelines established by the Partnership For
28 Reading, comprising the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the
29 National Institute for Literacy, and the United States Department of Education, based on findings
30 of the National Reading Panel;

31 (6) Wide-scale personnel training plans that would increase the number of Rhode Island
32 teachers who possess the Knowledge and Practice Standards for Teachers of Reading (including
33 practicum experience for specialists);

34 (7) Consistency of compliance with federal law regarding eligibility for services available

1 for persons with specific learning disabilities; and

2 (8) Encouraging coordination and collaboration between the Department of Elementary
3 and Secondary Education, teacher preparation programs at Rhode Island institutions of higher
4 education, and relevant community and professional organizations; and

5 The commission shall additionally:

6 (1) Consider current educational policies, practices, and training with regard to literacy
7 challenges, including dyslexia;

8 (2) Review existing dyslexia-related legislation in other jurisdictions, including without
9 limitation: California, Texas, Colorado, Louisiana, Ohio, Hawaii, Washington, Virginia,
10 Alabama, and Minnesota; and

11 (3) Draft proposed legislation that furthers dyslexia awareness and implements the
12 findings of the commission.

13 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet on
14 or before August 2012, and shall select ~~a chairperson~~ co-chairpersons from among the legislators,
15 who shall be appointed by the Speaker and the Senate President.

16 Eleven (11) members shall constitute a quorum for purposes of approving
17 recommendations and/or the commission report or other action items.

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

19 The membership of said commission shall receive no compensation for their services.

20 ~~The Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is requested to~~
21 ~~provide administrative support for the commission, and all~~ All departments and agencies of the
22 state shall furnish such advice and information, documentary and otherwise, to said commission
23 and its agents as is deemed necessary or desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of
24 this resolution.

25 The Joint Committee on Legislative Services is hereby authorized and directed to provide
26 suitable quarters for said commission; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the
28 General Assembly no later than January 30, 2013, and said commission shall expire on January
29 30, 2014.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
JOINT RESOLUTION
CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO ASSESS THE EDUCATIONAL
NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITH READING DISABILITIES AND DYSLEXIA

1 This resolution would create a twenty-one (21) member special legislative study
2 commission whose purpose it would be to assess the educational needs of children with reading
3 disabilities and dyslexia the co-chairpersons would be appointed by the Speaker and Senate
4 President from the legislators, and the commission would report back to the General Assembly no
5 later than January 30, 2013, and whose life would expire on January 30, 2014.

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