

2012 -- S 3028

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012

SENATE RESOLUTION

SENATE RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT IN DEVELOPING A STATEWIDE SHELLFISH MANAGEMENT PLAN

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

Date Introduced: May 31, 2012

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, Rhode Island's marine waters support a rich array of shellfish resources,
2 including an abundance of bay quahogs and soft-shelled clams (steamers), as well as mussels,
3 whelks, and recovering populations of oysters and bay scallops; and

4 WHEREAS, The Ocean State possesses these precious resources that are of enormous
5 importance, stemming from their ecological value and their value as renewable natural resources
6 that provide food, recreation, jobs, income, and other economic, social, and cultural benefits; and

7 WHEREAS, Aquaculture operations are increasingly important contributors to the food
8 system and the local economy, yet Rhode Island makes only a minor contribution to the annual
9 one billion dollar United States Aquaculture Industry, ranking at or near the bottom among all
10 states in terms of aquaculture production; and

11 WHEREAS, The ongoing and emerging shellfish restoration initiatives offer significant
12 opportunities for broad public benefits, but the initiatives are hampered by the non-existence of a
13 statewide plan or strategy in Rhode Island; and

14 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM), as
15 the chief steward of the State's natural resources, coordinated with the Rhode Island Marine
16 Fisheries Council, the Rhode Island fishing community, and the general public to develop and
17 implement commercial and recreational fishery management programs; now, therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

1 hereby recognizes and supports interagency collaborations that further Rhode Island's shellfish
2 investment strategies for continued growth and for diversification into new opportunities to
3 ensure long-term viability and sustainability of the industry; and be it further

4 RESOLVED, That this Senate supports the work of the Department of Environmental
5 Management (DEM), in collaboration with the Coastal Management Resources Management
6 Council (CMRC), the Rhode Island Department of Health (DOH), and the University of Rhode
7 Island, in developing a comprehensive state shellfish management plan that includes ways to
8 further grow the Rhode Island industry, including a review of current regulations as they relate to
9 shellfish harvesting restoration projects and permitting processes; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That this plan shall guide and support regulatory and management
11 coordination and consistency among state agencies, including DEM, DOH, and CRMC, other
12 public entities, municipalities, researchers, developers, and environmentalists within Rhode
13 Island's state waters, to address short- and long-term strategies for the restoration and expansion
14 of Rhode Island's shellfish resources and promotion of job creation and environmental
15 stewardship; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and he hereby is authorized and directed to
17 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Mark Gibson, Deputy Chief, Division of Fish
18 and Wildlife of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management and Grover Fugate,
19 Executive Director of the Coastal Resources Management Council.

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