

2013 -- H 6312

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2013

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

**RELATING TO ACQUISITION OF LAND - GENERAL ASSEMBLY LEASE APPROVAL -
JOINT RESOLUTIONS**

Introduced By: Representatives Blazejewski, and Lally

Date Introduced: June 27, 2013

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

1 SECTION 1. This Joint resolution is submitted pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws
2 subsection 37-6-2(d).

3 SECTION 2. General Assembly Lease Approval – The Rhode Island Board of Education,
4 the Department of Administration, and Commonwealth Ventures, LLC.

5 WHEREAS, Rhode Island College (the College), the University of Rhode Island (the
6 University), and the Community College of Rhode Island provide high-quality, public nursing
7 education and research programs, which produce approximately 80% of the state's nursing
8 program graduates each year; and

9 WHEREAS, The facilities housing the nursing programs at the College and the
10 University are aging, lack current technologies and smart classrooms, and are at their physical
11 enrollment capacities; and

12 WHEREAS, Projected local and national shortages of nursing candidates for licensure
13 and nursing faculty are expected to adversely impact the delivery of health care in the coming
14 years; and

15 WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of the State of Rhode Island to enable the University
16 and the College to educate students at all levels in the sciences and caring for complex health care
17 challenges in a low-risk environment, to provide critical continuing education in order to support
18 workforce development, and to produce more nursing graduates at the baccalaureate, masters, and

1 doctoral levels; and

2 WHEREAS, It is in the best interest of the State of Rhode Island to pursue cost-effective
3 financing for its public nursing higher education facilities as outlined in the May 23, 2011,
4 feasibility study authorized by the General Assembly in the fiscal year 2012 budget which
5 proposed the development of a single, shared, inter-institutional nursing sciences and education
6 facility to be located in Providence's Jewelry District; and

7 WHEREAS, Location of a shared facility in Providence's Jewelry District will allow the
8 College and the University to maximize symmetries and current collaborations with Brown
9 University's Alpert Medical School (AMS), and the state's major hospitals and other health care
10 providers; and

11 WHEREAS, A shared nursing education facility would be an investment by the citizens
12 of Rhode Island that will provide Rhode Island students, and particularly students from the urban
13 area in which the new nursing school will be located, with programs to encourage the pursuit of
14 careers in nursing, increased opportunities to attend the College and the University to pursue
15 nursing education, and financial and other assistance to facilitate nursing program completion;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Brown University and the AMS have proposed to enhance the connection of
18 College Hill to the Jewelry District and create a campus environment on and around the Alpert
19 Medical School; and

20 WHEREAS, Brown University and the AMS are eager to promote academic
21 collaborations with the University, the College, and other institutions of higher education; and

22 WHEREAS, Brown University has proposed a collaboration with Commonwealth
23 Ventures, LLC (the Developer) to renovate and develop the South Street Power Station at Davol
24 Square into a shared facility sufficient to house Brown's administrative programming, and the
25 nursing programs for the University and the College; and

26 WHEREAS, In order to address the projected shortage of new nurses, to attract more
27 nursing faculty, to provide state-of-the-art technology for teaching and research capabilities, and
28 to ensure cost-effective development of higher education facilities, the Board of Education and
29 the Department of Administration intend to work together to enter into a partnership with Brown
30 University and Commonwealth Ventures, LLC, to locate a Nursing Education Center ("NEC") to
31 be shared by the College and the University in the South Street Power Station; and

32 WHEREAS, A major vehicle making the development of the abandoned and vacant
33 South Street Power Station possible is the State's historic preservation tax credit program
34 intended to support a previously planned use of the building and now potentially helping to

1 enable the building to serve, in part, a beneficial State purpose; and

2 WHEREAS, The Developer has proposed that with the South Street Power Station leased
3 in its entirety by Brown and the NEC, the developer will privately develop at least one hundred
4 sixty five thousand (165,000) square feet of residential apartments suitable for rent by graduate,
5 medical, and upper-class advanced undergraduate student housing on the adjacent parcel; at least
6 ten thousand (10,000) square feet of retail space; a six hundred (600) car garage (to be financed
7 and developed by the City of Providence) on property leased by Brown University; and will
8 develop at least fifteen thousand (15,000) square feet of incubator lab space in an adjacent
9 facility; and

10 WHEREAS, The Developer anticipates the development of the NEC project in its
11 entirety will launch a \$206 million economic development project that will generate local
12 construction and other permanent jobs, and enhance a major gateway to Providence; and

13 WHEREAS, After analysis, the annual lease costs for the NEC in the South Street Power
14 Station project represent the lowest cost alternative for this type of project, without the additional
15 long term burden of ownership; and

16 WHEREAS, The Board of Education, the University, the College, and the Department of
17 Administration intend to negotiate the terms and conditions for the development and lease for the
18 NEC in the South Street Power Station with the Developer to protect the short and long-term
19 interests of the State, the College, and the University; and

20 WHEREAS, A shared governance committee for operational purposes will be established
21 as outlined in the feasibility study, and will be comprised of appropriate and equal numbers of
22 individuals from the University and the College and chaired by a senior staff member of the
23 Board of Education, with a process whereby the appeal of decisions made by the governance
24 committee may be made by the University or College directly to the Board; and

25 WHEREAS, Decisions regarding the NEC that involve and impact both the University
26 and College nursing programs shall not be made by either the University or College alone; now,
27 therefore be it

28 RESOLVED, That this General Assembly hereby encourages and supports the efforts of
29 the Rhode Island Board of Education and the Department of Administration to negotiate a long-
30 term lease for the NEC to be located at the South Street Power Station; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, That in the event that the State Properties Committee and/or the Board of
32 Education approves such a lease it shall immediately forward the lease to the Chairs of the House
33 and Senate Finance Committees of the General Assembly; and be it further

34 RESOLVED, That this Joint Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its passage by

1 the General Assembly; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
3 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Governor, the Chair of the Board of
4 Education, the Director of the Department of Administration, the State Budget Officer, and the
5 Chairman of the State Properties Committee.

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