

2013 -- S 0582

=====
LC01877
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2013

SENATE RESOLUTION

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES PROVIDE
ENHANCED BEHAVIORAL CARE SERVICES AND BENEFITS FOR RHODE ISLAND
VETERANS

Introduced By: Senators Ottiano, Bates, Pichardo, Felag, and Lynch

Date Introduced: February 28, 2013

Referred To: Senate Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs

1 WHEREAS, As of December 2008, an estimated 25 to 40 percent (400,000 to 640,000
2 soldiers) of the over 1.6 million American service members deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan
3 have returned with psychological and neurological injuries associated with post traumatic stress
4 disorder (PTSD) or traumatic brain injury (TBI), dubbed the “signature injuries” of the Iraq War;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, The current estimate of service members who will develop PTSD within a
7 year of leaving combat is between 10 and 30 percent; and

8 WHEREAS; The call back rate of the state’s own National Guard to active duty status is
9 the second highest in the entire United States, with over 10,000 unit deployments; and

10 WHEREAS, The number of veterans living in Rhode Island who served in the Gulf Wars
11 is three times higher than the national per capita average, and is expected to grow as troops begin
12 to withdraw from Afghanistan; and

13 WHEREAS, Approximately 3,000 veterans per year encounter the state’s behavioral
14 healthcare system, but there are many more veterans in need of services who do not receive
15 timely help; and

16 WHEREAS, A 2006 study illustrates the need in Rhode Island for trauma-related
17 services for veterans from the Gulf Wars (between 2,019 and 6,183 veterans in need), and other
18 wars (between 10,794 and 33,054 veterans in need); and

19 WHEREAS, Rhode Island does not currently have adequate resources to offer Post

1 Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) screening, referrals, and
2 treatment to all veterans upon return from deployment; and

3 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Senate has further resolved and requested that the
4 Congress of the United States pass legislation to establish funding for individual states, including
5 Rhode Island, to implement recommendations from the President’s Joining Forces Initiative to
6 strengthen behavioral healthcare systems and supportive services for returning service members,
7 veterans, and their families; now, therefore be it

8 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
9 respectfully requests the Rhode Island Department of Human Services:

10 1. Further explore joint State and US Veterans’ Administration funding opportunities to
11 implement recommendations from the President’s Joining Forces Initiative to strengthen
12 behavioral healthcare systems and supportive services for our Veterans and their families.

13 2. Expand Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment Programs (“SBIRT”).

14 3. Prioritize Veteran and National Guard populations in future grant applications; and be
15 it further

16 RESOLVED, That this Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
17 send a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Rhode Island Department of Human Services

=====
LC01877
=====