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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2013

JOINT RESOLUTION

CREATING A SPECIAL SELECT COMMISSION TO DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF  
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT IN RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Senators Sosnowski, Walaska, Nesselbush, and Bates

Date Introduced: March 06, 2013

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

(by request)

1           WHEREAS, It is vital to the public interest to properly manage solid waste generated  
2 within the territorial borders of the State of Rhode Island in order to protect the public health and  
3 welfare of the inhabitants of the state and to protect and preserve a healthy and natural  
4 environment; and

5           WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation is charged with the  
6 proper management of the state's solid waste through necessary, cost efficient, and  
7 environmentally sound systems, facilities, technology, and services for solid waste management  
8 and resource recovery; and

9           WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation enjoys a special  
10 relationship with the state's thirty-nine municipalities in that the central landfill is a public  
11 resource of limited and finite capacity which the state, as guardian and trustee for its people, has  
12 the right and the obligation to preserve for the use of its people; and

13           WHEREAS, Providing long range price stability and predictability for municipal solid  
14 waste disposal and recycling should continue to be a primary goal; and

15           WHEREAS, The state, by creating the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation and  
16 through it operating the central landfill and materials recycling facility, is a participant in the  
17 landfill services market and has entered that market for the purpose of serving citizens, residents,  
18 and municipalities of this state; and

19           WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation, through proper

1 organizational restructuring, fiscally sound reduction of operating costs, increased educational  
2 and outreach activity, and sound management practices has added ten years of life to the central  
3 landfill, providing capacity through 2034; and

4 WHEREAS, Recent changes in the law, improvements and innovations in processing  
5 technology, global economic influences, and development of local opportunities to grow the  
6 green economy in the state, necessitate a re-examination of the future of solid waste management  
7 in Rhode Island; and

8 WHEREAS, The task of creating a blueprint for the future of solid waste management in  
9 the state beyond 2034 requires an historic effort and unprecedented cooperation among diverse  
10 interest groups; now, therefore be it

11 RESOLVED, That the “Select Commission to Determine the Future of Solid Waste  
12 Management in Rhode Island,” be, and the same is hereby created consisting of eleven (11)  
13 members: the Director of the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation; the Director of the  
14 Department of Environmental Management, or his or her designee; the Director of the  
15 Department of Administration, or his or her designee; the Director of the League of Cities and  
16 Towns; the Director of Statewide Planning, or his or her designee; the Director of the Rhode  
17 Island Economic Development Corporation, or his or her designee; a designee of the Greater  
18 Providence Chamber of Commerce; a designee of the Environment Council of Rhode Island; a  
19 designee of the solid waste industry; and two (2) public members from the Town of Johnston, one  
20 appointed by the Senate President and one appointed by the Speaker of the House.

21 The purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study of all technical,  
22 environmental, policy, and financial issues concerning the future of solid waste management in  
23 the state of Rhode Island. The commission will specifically examine the following, as well as any  
24 other relevant issues:

- 25 a. The state’s proper role in solid waste management.
- 26 b. The mix of private and public finance, operation, and ownership of solid waste  
27 facilities which is most appropriate.
- 28 c. The steps necessary to maximize source reduction, reuse, and recycling of solid waste.
- 29 d. The appropriate methods to ensure that affordable, safe, and environmentally  
30 protective solid waste disposal is available for the remaining waste.
- 31 e. The appropriate funding mechanism for these facilities and activities.
- 32 f. Policies which enable a system of solid waste management to remain viable and  
33 consistent for the ongoing benefit of the citizens of Rhode Island.

34 The commission shall submit to the General Assembly a report that evaluates and

1 recommends solid waste disposal option(s) and sets forth an action plan that establishes the  
2 timeline necessary to implementing an economically sound disposal option to manage the state's  
3 solid waste once the central landfill's capacity is fully exhausted.

4         Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at  
5 the call of the Senate President and the Speaker of the House, and organize and shall select a  
6 chairperson from among the group. The chairperson shall not be the Director of Rhode Island  
7 Resource Recovery Corporation. The commission shall meet regularly, and vacancies in said  
8 commission shall be filled in like manner as the original appointment.

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

10         All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish such advice and information,  
11 documentary and otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or  
12 desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of this resolution; and be it further

13         RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the  
14 General Assembly no later than December 31, 2013, and said commission shall expire on June  
15 30, 2014.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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

CREATING A SPECIAL SELECT COMMISSION TO DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF  
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT IN RHODE ISLAND

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1           This resolution would create an eleven (11) member special select commission to make a  
2 comprehensive study of all technical, environmental, policy, and financial issues concerning the  
3 future of solid waste management in the state of Rhode Island, and who would report back to the  
4 General Assembly no later than December 31, 2013, and whose life would expire on June 30,  
5 2014.

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