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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

JOINT RESOLUTION

RELATING TO BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, AND
HOSPITALS - DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES OMBUDSPERSON ACT OF 2014

Introduced By: Representatives Naughton, Canario, O'Brien, Martin, and Slater

Date Introduced: February 06, 2014

Referred To: House Finance

- 1 2014 WHEREAS, The following principles and core values should serve to guide the
2 focus of community services/supports for adults with developmental disabilities in Rhode Island:
- 3 • Each person is unique with individual interests, strengths and needs; support and
4 services are responsive to the individual and his/her particular situation;
 - 5 • All of us develop and grow within a community of personal relationships; support and
6 services help build friendships and relationships with various people who are involved in our
7 personal lives;
 - 8 • Each person is treated with dignity and respect and is deserving of a meaningful life in
9 the community that offers a variety of individual choices that affect his/her own life/future and
10 opportunities to reach his/her fullest potential; we strive to meet the highest standards of personal
11 and professional integrity in order to assure each person has a good quality of life;
 - 12 • The supports/services that the individual receives shall be provided in a safe
13 environment and in the least restrictive manner;
 - 14 • There is equity and fairness to all stakeholders;
 - 15 • There is the capacity to accommodate new people within the system of services/support
16 without waiting lists;
 - 17 • The Division of Developmental Disabilities will be a catalyst in the shift of decision-
18 making to individuals with disabilities and their families regarding the choice of agency and the
19 supports provided. Innovative and cost-effective programs will require new ways of thinking,

1 including adaptive changes in our practice and organizational structure and increased
2 opportunities to access community resources available to all citizens;

3 • There is a continued investment and responsible management of growth and stability in
4 the system;

5 • Security, stability and resources are provided for individuals by supporting them in their
6 natural environment with their families for as long as possible;

7 • The system of services/support must have the capacity to respond to individuals with
8 extraordinary and/or emergency needs;

9 • Collaboration and partnerships among the stakeholders have been and will continue to
10 be an integral component of the accomplishments within the developmental disability community
11 system;

12 • Direct service staff should have a good working wage to ensure continuity, stability and
13 quality of support for people; and

14 • The Division of Developmental Disabilities should be accountable to individuals with
15 developmental disabilities, their families, the citizens of this State, and to one another; and

16 WHEREAS, There is a bewildering array of entities responsible for adults with
17 developmental disabilities protection and advocacy, including, but not limited to, the:

18 • Commission for Human Rights;

19 • Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing;

20 • Department of the Attorney General;

21 • Developmental Disabilities Council;

22 • Elder Protective Services of the Division of Elderly Affairs;

23 • Governor's Commission on Disabilities;

24 • Long-Term Care Ombudsperson;

25 • Mental Health Advocate;

26 • Office of Quality Assurance of the Department of Behavioral Healthcare,
27 Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals, and

28 • Rhode Island Disability Law Center; and

29 WHEREAS, In the middle of stressful individual/family crisis people have difficulty
30 determining which advocate(s) to go to for assistance to ensure those principles and core values
31 are being provided to every adult with developmental disabilities; and

32 WHEREAS, Rhode Island must ensure that the adults with developmental disabilities
33 protection and advocacy system(s) in place continues to improve and enhance supports for our
34 adults with disabilities, and assure that these supports are as robust as they can be; now, therefore

1 be it

2 RESOLVED, That this General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island and Providence
3 Plantations hereby respectfully requests that the RI Developmental Disabilities Council convenes
4 a meeting of adults with developmental disabilities protection and advocacy entities and other
5 stakeholders to:

6 • Clarify the roles of each adult with developmental disabilities protection and advocacy
7 entity;

8 • Identify gaps in the current adults with developmental disabilities protection and
9 advocacy system(s);

10 • Examine best policies and practices in the adults with developmental disabilities
11 protection and advocacy system(s);

12 • Identify whether and how Rhode Island's policies and practices can be refined in light
13 of excellent adults with developmental disabilities protection and advocacy models, including,
14 but not limited to:

15 • Develop a model memorandum of agreements amongst adults with developmental
16 disabilities protection and advocacy, that includes guidelines for:

17 1. Effective communications to complainants regarding the status of complaints handled
18 by more than one adult with developmental disabilities protection and advocacy entity;

19 2. An outreach and public awareness program targeted at the adults with developmental
20 disabilities, their families and supports;

21 3. An adults with developmental disabilities "friendly" website focused on the adults with
22 developmental disabilities protection and advocacy system(s);

23 4. Publicizing the § 40-8.5-2(e) statewide toll free, twenty-four (24) hour a day, seven (7)
24 days quality assurance hotline operated by the department of behavioral healthcare,
25 developmental disabilities and hospitals, and the § 42-66-8 statewide toll free, twenty-four (24)
26 hour a day, seven (7) days a week telephone line, to report abuse, neglect, exploitation and self-
27 neglect of the elderly; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That this General Assembly hereby respectfully requests that the RI
29 Developmental Disabilities Council provides a written report to the General Assembly on or
30 before January 5, 2015, regarding its policies and practices; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
32 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Governor, the Attorney General, the
33 Chairperson of the Developmental Disabilities Council, the Secretary of the Executive Office of
34 Health and Human Services, the Director of the Department of Behavioral Healthcare,

1 Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals, the Director of the Department of Human Services;
2 the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Disability Law Center; the Long-Term Care
3 Ombudsperson, the Mental Health Advocate, and the Chairpersons of the Commission for Human
4 Rights; Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; and Governor's Commission on
5 Disabilities.

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