

2014 -- H 7818

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND HOUSING
RESOURCES ACT OF 1998

Introduced By: Representative Frank G.Ferri

Date Introduced: March 04, 2014

Referred To: House Finance

(by request)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-128-8 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-128 entitled "Rhode
2 Island Housing Resources Act of 1998" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **42-128-8. Powers and duties.** -- In order to provide housing opportunities for all Rhode
4 Islanders, to maintain the quality of housing in Rhode Island, and to coordinate and make
5 effective the housing responsibilities of the agencies and subdivisions of the state, the
6 commission shall have the following powers and duties:

7 (1) Policy, planning and coordination of state housing functions. - The commission shall
8 have the power and duty:

9 (i) To prepare and adopt the state's plans for housing; provided, however, that this
10 provision shall not be interpreted to contravene the prerogative of the state planning council to
11 adopt a state guide plan for housing.

12 (ii) To prepare, adopt, and issue the state's housing policy.

13 (iii) To conduct research on and make reports regarding housing issues in the state.

14 (iv) To advise the governor and general assembly on housing issues and to coordinate
15 housing activities among government agencies and agencies created by state law or providing
16 housing services under government programs.

17 (2) Establish, implement, and monitor state performance measures and guidelines for
18 housing programs. - The commission shall have the power and the duty:

1 (i) To promulgate performance measures and guidelines for housing programs conducted
2 under state law.

3 (ii) To monitor and evaluate housing responsibilities established by state law, and to
4 establish a process for annual reporting on the outcomes of the programs and investments of the
5 state in housing for low and moderate income people.

6 (iii) To hear and resolve disputes pertaining to housing issues.

7 (3) Administer the programs pertaining to housing resources that may be assigned by
8 state law. - The commission shall have the power and duty to administer programs for housing,
9 housing services, and community development, including, but not limited to, programs pertaining
10 to:

11 (i) Abandoned properties and the remediation of blighting conditions.

12 (ii) Lead abatement and to manage a lead hazard abatement program in cooperation with
13 the Rhode Island housing and mortgage finance corporation.

14 (iii) Services for the homeless.

15 (iv) Rental assistance.

16 (v) Community development.

17 (vi) Outreach, education and technical assistance services.

18 (vii) Assistance, including financial support, to non-profit organizations and community
19 development corporations.

20 (viii) Tax credits that assist in the provision of housing or foster community development
21 or that result in support to non-profit organizations performing functions to accomplish the
22 purposes of this chapter.

23 (ix) The Supportive Services Program, the purpose of which is to help prevent and end
24 homelessness among those who have experienced long-term homelessness and for whom certain
25 services in addition to housing are essential. State funding for this program may leverage other
26 resources for the purpose of providing supportive services. Services provided pursuant to this
27 subsection may include, but not be limited to: assistance with budgeting and paying rent; access
28 to employment; encouraging tenant involvement in facility management and policies; medication
29 monitoring and management; daily living skills related to food, housekeeping and socialization;
30 counseling to support self-identified goals; referrals to mainstream health, mental health and
31 treatment programs; and conflict resolution.

32 (x) The neighborhood opportunities program, the purpose of which shall be to address the
33 housing and revitalization needs of the state's deteriorating neighborhoods. The neighborhood
34 opportunities program shall provide financial assistance to implement the following three (3)

1 components:

2 (A) The family affordable housing program, the purpose of which shall be to produce an
3 additional supply of housing units at rents affordable to families working at or near minimum
4 wage. State funding will leverage other resources for the production of housing, to create mixed
5 income housing, and to revitalize neighborhoods through the rehabilitation of existing
6 substandard units.

7 (B) The permanent supportive housing program, the purpose of which shall be to produce
8 additional housing for individuals with disabilities to be coupled with services and case
9 management to stabilize homeless individuals in permanent housing at affordable rents for
10 persons receiving Supplemental Social Security Income (SSI).

11 (C) The neighborhood revitalization program, the purpose of which shall be to provide
12 grants to local communities for renovation, demolition, and homeownership opportunities in
13 neighborhoods designated for revitalization.

14 SECTION 2. At the general election to be held on the Tuesday next after the first
15 Monday in November 2014, there shall be submitted to the people for their approval or rejection
16 the following proposition:

17 "Shall the action of the general assembly, by an act passed by the January 2014 session
18 authorizing the issuance of bonds, refunding bonds, and temporary notes of the State of Rhode
19 Island in the amount of seventy-five million dollars (\$75,000,000) to provide funds to the housing
20 resources commission to be allocated to finance the cost of the neighborhood opportunities
21 program be approved, and the issuance of such bonds, refunding bonds, and temporary notes in
22 accordance with the act be authorized?"

23 SECTION 3. Sections 2 and 3 of this act shall take effect upon passage. The remainder of
24 this act shall take effect upon the approval of the act by a majority of those voting on the question
25 at the general election specified in Section 2.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND HOUSING
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1 This act would create the Neighborhood Opportunities Program, and would reference a
2 referendum at the general election in November 2014 on a proposition to issue seventy-five
3 million dollars (\$75,000,000) in bonds to fund that program.

4 Sections 2 and 3 of this act would take effect upon passage. The remainder of this act
5 would take effect upon the approval of the act by a majority of those voting on the question at the
6 general election specified in Section 2

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