

2014 -- S 2793

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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JOINT RESOLUTION

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

Introduced By: Senator Frank Lombardo

Date Introduced: March 25, 2014

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

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 sixteen (16)  
13 members: two (2) of whom shall be members of the House, to be appointed by the Speaker; two  
14 (2) of whom shall be members of the Senate, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one  
15 of whom shall be the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council, or  
16 designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation,  
17 or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Department of Environmental  
18 Management, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Department of  
19 Administration, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the League of Cities and  
20 Towns, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of Statewide Planning, or designee; one of  
21 whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation, or designee; one of  
22 whom shall be the President of the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce, or designee; one  
23 of whom shall be the President of the Environment Council of Rhode Island, or designee; one of  
24 whom shall be a designee of the solid waste industry, to be appointed by the Senate President and  
25 the Speaker of the House; and two (2) of whom shall be public members from the Town of  
26 Johnston, one of whom shall be appointed by the Senate President and one of whom shall be  
27 appointed by the Speaker of the House.

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

32 a. The state’s proper role in solid waste management.

33 b. The mix of private and public finance, operation, and ownership of solid waste  
34 facilities which is most appropriate.

- 1 c. The steps necessary to maximize source reduction, reuse, and recycling of solid waste.
- 2 d. The appropriate methods to ensure that affordable, safe, and environmentally  
3 protective solid waste disposal is available for the remaining waste.
- 4 e. The appropriate funding mechanism for these facilities and activities.
- 5 f. Policies which enable a system of solid waste management to remain viable and  
6 consistent for the ongoing benefit of the citizens of Rhode Island.

7 The commission shall submit to the General Assembly a report that evaluates and  
8 recommends solid waste disposal option(s) and sets forth an action plan that establishes the  
9 timeline necessary to implementing an economically sound disposal option to manage the state's  
10 solid waste once the central landfill's capacity is fully exhausted.

11 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at  
12 the call of the Senate President and the Speaker of the House and organize. The Speaker of the  
13 House and the President of the Senate shall each select one member to serve as co-chairperson of  
14 the commission. The commission shall meet regularly, and vacancies in said commission shall be  
15 filled in like manner as the original appointment.

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

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

20 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the  
21 General Assembly no later than January 5, 2016, and said commission shall expire on June 30,  
22 2016.

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