

2014 -- S 2824

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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

**TO APPROVE AND PUBLISH AND SUBMIT TO THE ELECTORS A PROPOSITION OF
AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE (ETHICS COMMISSION)**

Introduced By: Senators Sheehan, Conley, McCaffrey, E O`Neill, and Cote

Date Introduced: March 25, 2014

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

1 RESOLVED, That a majority of all members elected to each house of the general
2 assembly voting therefor, the following amendment to the Constitution of the state be proposed to
3 the qualified electors of the state in accordance with the provisions of Article XIV of the
4 Constitution for their approval and the following Articles are hereby amended, as hereinafter set
5 forth, effective on January 1, 2015, to read as follows:

6 ARTICLE VI

7 OF THE LEGISLATIVE POWER

8 Section 5. Immunities of general assembly members. -- The persons of all members of
9 the general assembly shall be exempt from arrest and their estates from attachment in any civil
10 action, during the session of the general assembly, and two days before the commencement and
11 two days after the termination thereof, and all process served contrary hereto shall be void. For
12 any speech in debate in either house, no member shall be questioned in any other place, except by
13 the ethics commission; provided, however, that members of the general assembly shall be free,
14 without question or penalty, to express an opinion or engage in debate, verbally or in writing,
15 relative to any matter within their core legislative duties.

16 ARTICLE III

17 OF QUALIFICATION FOR OFFICE

18 Section 8. Ethics commission -- Code of ethics. – Jurisdiction.-- The general assembly
19 shall establish an independent non-partisan ethics commission which shall adopt a code of ethics

1 including, but not limited to, provisions on conflicts of interest, confidential information, use of
2 position, contracts with government agencies and financial disclosure. All elected and appointed
3 officials and employees of state and local government, of boards, commissions and agencies shall
4 be subject to the code of ethics and the jurisdiction of the ethics commission. The ethics
5 commission shall have the jurisdiction and authority to investigate and adjudicate all alleged
6 violations of the code of ethics and to impose penalties, as provided by law; and the commission
7 shall have the power to remove from office officials who are not subject to impeachment.

8 Section 9. Ethics commission composition.-- The ethics commission shall be composed
9 of nine (9) members appointed by the governor; provided, that the president of the senate, the
10 minority leader of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, the majority leader of
11 the house of representatives, and the minority leader of the house of representatives shall each
12 submit to the governor a list of names of at least five (5) individuals from which the governor
13 shall appoint one individual from each of the lists so submitted, and four (4) individuals without
14 regard to the lists submitted by the legislative leaders. The terms of service for the appointed
15 members shall be as provided by law.

16 RESOLVED, That the said proposition of amendment shall be submitted to the electors
17 for their approval or rejection at the next statewide general election. The voting places in the
18 several cities and towns shall be kept open during the hours required by law for voting therein for
19 general officers of the state; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause the said proposition of amendment to
21 be published as a part of this resolution in the newspapers of the state prior to the date of the said
22 meetings of the said electors; and the said proposition shall be inserted in the warrants or notices
23 to be issued previous to said meetings of the electors for the purpose or warning the town, ward,
24 or district meetings, and said proposition shall be read by the town, ward, or district meetings to
25 be held as aforesaid; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the town, ward, and district meetings to be held aforesaid shall be
27 warned, and the list of voters shall be canvassed and made up, and the said town, ward, and
28 district meetings shall be conducted in the same manner as now provided by law for the town,
29 ward, and district meetings for the election of general officers of the state.

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