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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND THE CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE RHODE ISLAND FAMILY COURT CONVENE A TASK FORCE WITH THE GOAL OF FOCUSING ON IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS, COORDINATION, COURT SCHEDULING, PLACEMENT DECISION-MAKING, AND INFORMATION SHARING FOR CHILDREN IN STATE CARE

Introduced By: Senators DiPalma, Goldin, Ottiano, and Miller

Date Introduced: March 03, 2015

Referred To: Senate Health & Human Services

1 WHEREAS, Responsibility for the well-being of the state's most vulnerable children is
2 shared across multiple state agencies in Rhode Island, including the Department of Children,
3 Youth, and Families (DCYF); the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental
4 Disabilities, and Hospitals (BHDDH); the Department of Education; and the Family Court; and

5 WHEREAS, Coordinating the care of children served by the state's child welfare system
6 can be challenging. Children's needs vary, different information may be required for decision-
7 making, and communication systems and timelines can fluctuate. When unaddressed, these
8 differences can get in the way of children receiving the support they need in their most desperate
9 hour; and

10 WHEREAS, The Senate Task Force on DCYF and the Family Care Networks Contracts
11 included in its January 2015 final report a recommendation that a task force be established
12 specifically to focus on the interrelationship among DCYF, the Family Court, and provider
13 agencies, including health care and education; now, therefore be it

14 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
15 hereby respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human
16 Services and the Chief Justice of the Rhode Island Family Court convene a task force whose goal
17 focuses on improving communications, coordination, court scheduling, placement decision-

1 making, and information sharing for children in state care; and be it further

2 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby respectfully requests that the task force includes
3 representatives from BHDDH, the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary
4 Education, the Office of the Child Advocate, and provider organizations; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby respectfully requests that the task force identifies
6 policies, processes, and practices that stand in the way of communications, coordination, and the
7 effective and efficient use of time in placement and care decisions for children in state care; and
8 be it further

9 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby respectfully requests that the Secretary of the
10 Executive Office of Health and Human Services submits a report from said task force to the
11 Rhode Island General Assembly on or before January 7, 2016, that details the actions that will be
12 taken by DCYF and each organization represented on the task force to improve communication,
13 coordination, and the effective and efficient use of time in placement and care decisions for
14 children in state care; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
16 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Governor, the Secretary of the Executive
17 Office of Health and Human Services, the Chief Judge of the Family Court, the Acting Director
18 of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families, the Director of the Department of
19 Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals, the Commissioner of
20 Education, and the Child Advocate.

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