

2016 -- S 2169

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

SENATE RESOLUTION

SUPPORTING AND ENCOURAGING STEM/STEAM DEGREES AND PROGRAMS IN
RHODE ISLAND ELEMENTARY, SECONDARY, AND INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER
EDUCATION

Introduced By: Senators Gallo, Satchell, Pearson, DiPalma, and Picard

Date Introduced: January 27, 2016

Referred To: Senate Education

1 WHEREAS, Job opportunities and careers in the fields of Science, Technology,
2 Engineering, and Math (STEM) are projected to grow; and

3 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island School of Design led the initiative that incorporated Art
4 and Design into the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math, thus changing STEM
5 to STEAM. The goal is to combine for example, the mind of a scientist with that of an artist.
6 Green architecture is one area that combines science and technology with a design and artistic
7 element that creates environmentally friendly buildings; and

8 WHEREAS, Many, but not all, public high schools and career and technical education
9 (CTE) schools in Rhode Island offer programs in agricultural, environmental or technical studies
10 to prepare students for green sector careers; and

11 WHEREAS, The award-winning JASON Project, founded by Dr. Robert Ballard,
12 Professor of Oceanography at the University of Rhode Island, is an educational program that
13 reaches over 1 million students and 25,000 teachers annually. The program makes available
14 curriculum in Climate, Weather, and Ecology for schools, after-school programs, and summer
15 camps. In a program called, "The Climate: Seas of Change", students investigate and analyze the
16 causes and impacts of climate change; and

17 WHEREAS, The Community College of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and the
18 University of Rhode Island offer opportunities to pursue degrees in some green STEAM areas of
19 study; and

1 WHEREAS, Climate change adaptation can incentivize new and expanded economic
2 activity and create jobs in the green sector. Areas of higher education study around coastal zone
3 protection may fill a need for those skilled in planning, mapping, constructing coastal defenses,
4 reinforcing infrastructure, and green architecture and design; now, therefore be it

5 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
6 hereby respectfully requests the Board of Education to submit a plan to the General Assembly by
7 January 1, 2017, to incentivize the creation and expansion of STEM/STEAM in all Rhode Island
8 elementary and secondary schools, including a guided pathway into certificate and degree
9 programs at our public institutions of higher education to prepare students for jobs in the green
10 economy; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That this Senate respectfully requests CCRI, RIC and URI to submit a
12 report to the General Assembly by January 1, 2017, that identifies current partners and potential
13 future collaboration with green sector businesses that identify areas of job demand and job growth
14 with a corresponding schedule to develop certificate and degree programs; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That this Senate respectfully requests the Board of Education to encourage
16 our public higher education institutions to further develop degree programs leading to green
17 sector employment in the areas of climate change risk evaluation, sustainability, resiliency and
18 adaptation; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
20 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Chairperson of the Board of Education, the
21 President of the Community College of Rhode Island, the President of Rhode Island College, the
22 President of the University of Rhode Island, the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary
23 Education, and the Commissioner of Postsecondary Education.

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