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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

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

**CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A
COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING
GRANDPARENT RIGHTS**

Introduced By: Senators DiPalma, Archambault, Lombardi, and McCaffrey

Date Introduced: January 27, 2016

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

1 WHEREAS, Grandparents can provide grandchildren with a connection to the past
2 through story-telling about the parent's and their own childhood, to the child's heritage and to
3 history through accounts of what life was like when they were growing up; and

4 WHEREAS, Grandparents can provide grandchildren with a connection to extended
5 family, such as cousins, and great aunts and uncles when appropriate; and

6 WHEREAS, The alienation of grandchildren from their grandparents affects all
7 populations regardless of socio-economic boundaries and can affect the mental, emotional and
8 physical health of grandchildren; and

9 WHEREAS, Grandparent visitation rights must be consistent with due process and the
10 constitutional rights of parents; now, therefore be it

11 RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created
12 consisting of 10 members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the Senate, not more than two
13 (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the Senate President, one of whom shall be
14 the Chief Judge of the Family Court, or designee; one of whom shall be the Chief Strategy
15 Officer from the Department of Children, Youth and Families, (DCYF), or designee; one of
16 whom shall be the Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), or
17 designee; one of whom shall be a representative of Adoption Rhode Island, or a similar
18 community-based service provider; and three (3) of whom shall be members of the public, to be
19 appointed by the Senate President.

1 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a permanent advisory
2 commission, a legislative study commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly
3 resolution, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu
4 of a legislator, provided that the Majority Leader or the Minority Leader of the political party
5 which is entitled to the appointment consents to that appointment of the member of the general
6 public.

7 The purpose of the said commission shall be to conduct a comprehensive review and
8 make recommendations regarding grandparent rights.

9 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at
10 the call of the President of the Senate, who shall appoint a chairperson.

11 Vacancies in said commission shall be filled in like manner as the original appointment.

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

13 All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish such advice and information,
14 documentary and otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or
15 desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of this resolution.

16 The Joint Committee on Legislative Services is hereby authorized and directed to provide
17 suitable quarters for said commission; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the
19 President of the Senate no later than March 1, 2017 and said commission shall expire on June 1,
20 2017.

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