

2016 -- S 2594

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

SENATE RESOLUTION

CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE TOPIC OF
HEALTH LITERACY

Introduced By: Senators DiPalma, Miller, Goldin, Gallo, and Satchell

Date Introduced: February 25, 2016

Referred To: Senate Health & Human Services

1 WHEREAS, Health literacy is the degree to which individuals have the capacity to
2 obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate
3 health decisions; and

4 WHEREAS, Health literacy affects people's ability to:

- 5 • Navigate the health care system, including filling out complex forms and locating
6 providers and services;
- 7 • Share personal information, such as health history, with providers; and
- 8 • Engage in self-care and chronic-disease management; and

9 WHEREAS, According to research studies, persons with limited health literacy skills are
10 more likely to skip important preventive measures and are more likely to have chronic conditions
11 and are less able to manage these conditions effectively; and

12 WHEREAS, Persons with limited health literacy skills are also significantly more likely
13 to report their health as poor and will more often make greater use of services designed to treat
14 complications of disease as opposed to using services designed to prevent complications; and

15 WHEREAS, In addition, persons with limited health literacy skills have demonstrated a
16 higher rate of hospitalization and use of emergency services, resulting in higher health care costs;
17 now, therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created
19 consisting of twelve (12) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the Rhode Island

1 Senate, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the President of
2 the Senate; three (3) of whom shall be consumer advocates, to be appointed by the President of
3 the Senate; one of whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island Community Action Program,
4 or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health, or
5 designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island Office of the Health Insurance
6 Commissioner, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island Department of
7 Elderly Affairs, or designee; one of whom shall be the Commissioner of the Rhode Island
8 Department of Education, or designee; and one of whom shall be the Executive Director of
9 Health Source Rhode Island, or designee.

10 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a permanent advisory
11 commission, a legislative study commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly
12 resolution, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu
13 of a legislator, provided that the Majority Leader or the Minority Leader of the political party
14 which is entitled to the appointment, consents to the member of the general public.

15 The purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study on the topic of
16 health literacy in order to develop a strategic plan that would maximize opportunities for
17 collaboration and programs that would assist Rhode Islanders' ability to navigate the health care
18 system and improve health outcomes.

19 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at
20 the call of the President of the Senate and organize and shall select a chairperson.

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

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

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

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

28 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the
29 Governor and the President of the Senate no later than February 1, 2017, and said commission
30 shall expire on July 1, 2017.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
SENATE RESOLUTION
CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE TOPIC OF
HEALTH LITERACY

1 This resolution would create a twelve (12) member special legislative study commission
2 whose purpose it would be to study the topic of health literacy, and who would report back to the
3 Governor and the President of the Senate no later than February 1, 2017, and whose life would
4 expire on July 1, 2017.

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