

2017 -- S 0197

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

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 (GOVERNOR AND
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR TO APPEAR JOINTLY ON THE BALLOT)

Introduced By: Senators Picard, and Pearson

Date Introduced: February 01, 2017

Referred To: Senate Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs

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
3 to the qualified electors of the state in accordance with the provisions of Article XIV of the
4 Constitution for their approval and that, if approved, it take the place of Article IV Section 1
5 which is hereby amended to read as follows:

6 SECTION 1. Election and terms of governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state,
7 attorney general, general treasurer, and general assembly members. – The governor, lieutenant
8 governor, secretary of state, attorney general and general treasurer shall be elected on the Tuesday
9 after the first Monday in November, quadrennially commencing A.D. 1994, and every four (4)
10 years thereafter, and shall severally hold their offices, subject to recall as provided for herein, for
11 four (4) years from the first Tuesday of January next succeeding their election and until their
12 successors are elected and qualified. No person shall serve consecutively in the same general
13 office for more than two (2) full terms, excluding any partial term of less than two (2) years
14 previously served.

15 Commencing with the general quadrennial election in A.D. 2022, all candidates for the
16 offices of governor and lieutenant governor shall form joint candidacies in the manner prescribed
17 by law so that each voter shall cast a single vote for a candidate for governor and a candidate for
18 lieutenant governor running together. In primary elections candidates for the office of governor
19 may choose to run without a lieutenant governor candidate.

1 The senators and representatives in the general assembly shall be elected on the Tuesday
2 after the first Monday in November, biennially in even numbered years, and shall severally hold
3 their offices for two (2) years from the first Tuesday of January next succeeding their election and
4 until their successors are elected and qualified.

5 Recall is authorized in the case of a general officer who has been indicted or informed
6 against for a felony, convicted of a misdemeanor, or against whom a finding of probable cause of
7 violation of the code of ethics has been made by the ethics commission. Recall shall not,
8 however, be instituted at any time during the first six (6) months or the last year of an individual's
9 term of office.

10 Such a recall may be instituted by filing with the state board of elections an application
11 for issuance of a recall petition against said general officer which is signed by duly qualified
12 electors equal to three percent (3%) of the total number of votes cast at the last preceding general
13 election for that office. If, upon verification, the application is determined to contain signatures of
14 the required number of electors, the state board of elections shall issue a recall petition for
15 circulation amongst the electors of the state. Within ninety (90) days of issuance, recall petitions
16 containing the signatures of duly qualified electors constituting fifteen percent (15%) of the total
17 number of votes cast in the last preceding general election for said office must be filed with the
18 state board of elections.

19 The signatures to the application and to the recall petition need not all be on one sheet of
20 paper, but each such application and petition must contain an identical statement naming the
21 person to be recalled, the general office held by said person, and the grounds for such recall set
22 forth in a statement of one hundred (100) words or less approved by the board of elections. Each
23 signatory must set forth his or her signature as it appears on the voting list, the date of signing,
24 and his or her place of residence. The person witnessing the signatures of each elector on said
25 petition must sign a statement under oath on said sheet attesting that the signatures thereon are
26 genuine and were signed in his or her presence.

27 If the requisite number of signatures are not obtained within said ninety (90) day period,
28 the recall effort shall terminate. Upon verification of the requisite number of signatures, a special
29 election shall be scheduled at which the issue of removing said office holder and the grounds
30 therefor shall be placed before the electors of the state. If a majority of those voting support
31 removal of said office holder, the office shall be immediately declared vacant and shall be filled
32 in accordance with the constitution and laws of the state. The person so removed shall not be
33 eligible to fill the unexpired portion of the term of office. The general assembly shall provide by
34 statute for implementation of the recall process.

1 RESOLVED, That this amendment shall take, in the Constitution of the State, the place
2 of Section 1, Article IV of the Constitution;

3 It is further

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

8 RESOLVED, That the secretary of state shall cause the said proposition of amendment to
9 be published as a part of this resolution in the newspapers of the state prior to the date of the said
10 meetings of the said electors; and the said proposition shall be inserted in the warrants or notices
11 to be issued previous to said meetings of the electors for the purpose of warning the town, ward,
12 or district meetings, and said proposition shall be read by the town, ward, or district meetings to
13 be held as aforesaid; and be it further

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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- 1 This joint resolution would amend the constitution so that in the year 2022 and thereafter,
- 2 candidates for the office of governor and lieutenant governor would form joint candidacies so that
- 3 voters cast a single vote for a candidate for governor and lieutenant governor.

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