

2018 -- H 7402

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LC004332  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2018

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A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION  
ON DISABILITIES

Introduced By: Representatives McNamara, Diaz, Casimiro, Canario, and Azzinaro

Date Introduced: February 01, 2018

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-51-11 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-51 entitled  
2 "Governor's Commission on Disabilities" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **42-51-11. Mary Brennan fellowship fund.**

4 (a) There is established the Mary Brennan fellowship fund ("the fellowship fund"), which  
5 shall be utilized to create a fellowship program for college students and young adults with  
6 disabilities.

7 (b) These fellowships shall provide a semester-long, part-time placement with the  
8 commission in Rhode Island, working on disability policy and research. Each fellow will be  
9 assigned to a specific placement, providing assistance to the commission in disability policy.  
10 Mentor experiences will introduce the fellows to disability policy issues and actions at the local,  
11 state and federal levels. The fellowships will offer students an opportunity to:

12 (1) Gain perspective on the role and responsibility of the commission;

13 (2) Knowledge of national/state disability programs;

14 (3) Policy issues and research;

15 (4) Meet with decision makers, experts and critics in disability and related policy fields;

16 and

17 (5) Develop networks with local, regional, and national based experts, and researchers

18 who can assist in career development and future endeavors.

1 (c) The commission will provide each fellow with a stipend of at least one thousand five  
2 hundred dollars (\$1,500) and reimbursement for authorized travel.

3 (d) This fellowship program is designed for individuals with demonstrated ~~leadership and~~  
4 ~~expertise~~ interest in policy and research affecting people with disabilities. Applicants must have:

5 (1) ~~Completed at least three (3) semesters of college-level study;~~

6 (2) ~~Be enrolled as a full or part-time student in an accredited college or university in~~  
7 ~~Rhode Island;~~

8 (3) Leadership ability;

9 (4) The endorsement of a current/former supervisor/teacher;

10 (5) ~~Approval on the part of the college/university to receive credit for the fellowship if~~  
11 ~~selected; and~~

12 (6) The ability to participate in the semester-long program ~~in Providence~~ for at least two  
13 hundred and forty (240) hours during the spring and fall semesters or in the summer.

14 (e) The commission shall give preference in its selection of fellows to Rhode Island  
15 residents who are:

16 (1) ~~College students~~ Students and young adults with disabilities, and then to;

17 (2) College students enrolled in a course of study in education and/or human services for  
18 persons with disabilities.

19 (f) The general assembly shall appropriate ~~ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for the fiscal~~  
20 ~~year ending June 30, 1998 and~~ annually the sums it deems necessary to implement the purposes  
21 of this section.

22 (g) The commission is authorized and empowered to receive donations and grants from  
23 sources including, but not limited to, the federal government, governmental and private  
24 foundations, and corporate and individual donors; these donations and grants to be deposited in  
25 the fellowship fund. The commission may create additional fellowships from available funds.

26 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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1           This act would remove the requirement that a student with disabilities be a college  
2 student in order to be eligible to participate in the Mary Brennan fellowship fund program and  
3 would also remove the requirement that the fellowship program take place in Providence.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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