

**2023 -- H 6019**

LC002183

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023**

**H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N**

**SUPPORTING THE REINSTATEMENT OF RHODE ISLAND STATE WORKER  
PENSIONERS COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS (COLAS)**

Introduced By: Representatives Place, Chippendale, Vella-Wilkinson, Noret, Finkelman,  
J. Brien, Rea, Solomon, Casimiro, and Shallcross Smith

Date Introduced: March 01, 2023

Referred To: House Finance

1           WHEREAS, In November of 2011, the Rhode Island General Assembly enacted into law  
2 the Rhode Island Retirement Security Act of 2011, which suspended COLA payments for all  
3 State Employees, Teachers, Judges, State Police, BHDDH Nurses and Correctional Officers until  
4 the plan's funding level for all groups, calculated in the aggregate, exceeded 80 percent. It was  
5 projected that this would occur in 2031; and

6           WHEREAS, Depending on economic factors, currently, for members with a suspended  
7 COLA, an interim COLA is calculated and awarded every four years during the suspension  
8 period. The "4-Year" COLA was last awarded in 2021, and is scheduled to be awarded next in  
9 2025; and

10           WHEREAS, The annual inflation rate for the United States, according to U.S. Labor  
11 Department data was 6.5 percent for the 12 months that ended on December 2022, after rising 7.1  
12 percent previously. This rise in prices has critically reduced the purchasing power of consumers,  
13 many of whom had already been negatively affected by COVID-19 shut-downs, lay-offs,  
14 furloughs and unemployment spiking to 18.4 percent, the highest in state records going back to  
15 1976; and

16           WHEREAS, In response to these economic factors, Social Security benefits and  
17 Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments have increased by 8.7 percent in 2023, based on  
18 increases in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers; and

19           WHEREAS, Rhode Island's 2022-23 fiscal year ended with a surplus of more than \$600

1 million; now, therefore be it

2           RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby  
3 supports the reinstatement of Rhode Island State Worker Pensioners Cost-of- Living Adjustments  
4 (COLA).

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