

2025 -- H 6186

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CREATING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY AND DEFINE THE TERM "HOUSEBOAT"

Introduced By: Representatives Carson, Casimiro, and Craven

Date Introduced: April 04, 2025

Referred To: House Municipal Government & Housing

1 WHEREAS, The State of Rhode Island has numerous statutes, regulations, and policies
2 governing vessels and water-based dwellings, but there is no uniform definition of "houseboat"
3 across all relevant authorities; and

4 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM), the
5 Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC), and the United States Coast Guard each
6 provide varying definitions and regulatory frameworks concerning floating structures,
7 houseboats, and live-aboard vessels; and

8 WHEREAS, A clear and consistent definition of "houseboat" is essential for ensuring
9 proper regulatory oversight, environmental protection, and fair application of state and local laws;
10 now, therefore be it

11 RESOLVED, That the Rhode Island House of Representatives hereby creates a Task
12 Force to study and define the term "houseboat" in consideration of existing definitions under state
13 law, Department of Environmental Management regulations, Coastal Resources Management
14 Commission regulations, and Coast Guard classifications; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That this Task Force shall consist of the following members:

16 (1) Two (2) members of the House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker of the
17 House, one of whom shall serve as Chair, who shall call the meetings;

18 (2) One representative from the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
19 (DEM), appointed by the Director of the DEM;

20 (3) One representative from the Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC),

1 appointed by the chair of CRMC;

2 (4) One representative from the Rhode Island Marine Trades Association, appointed by
3 the Speaker of the House;

4 (5) Three (3) representatives from three (3) different municipal harbor management
5 commissions, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

6 (6) One representative from the United States Coast Guard Sector Southeastern New
7 England, by request of the House of Representatives to the United States Coast Guard for this
8 appointment; in the event the United States Coast Guard declines, or fails to respond to this
9 request in the affirmative, then a member who shall be an expert in federal vessel classifications,
10 shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House;

11 (7) One representative from the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, appointed by
12 the director of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns; and

13 (8) Any additional members as deemed necessary by the Chair to ensure broad
14 stakeholder representation; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Task Force shall meet no fewer than four (4) times and shall
16 deliver a final report, including recommendations for a standardized definition of "houseboat," to
17 the Speaker of the House no later than January 31, 2026; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That the members of the Task Force shall serve without compensation; and
19 be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
21 transmit duly certified copies of this Resolution to the Speaker of the House, the Director of the
22 Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, the Executive Director of the Coastal
23 Resources Management Council, and the Commander of the United States Coast Guard Sector
24 Southeastern New England.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
HOUSE RESOLUTION
CREATING A TASK FORCE TO STUDY AND DEFINE THE TERM "HOUSEBOAT"

- 1 This Resolution would authorize the creation of a special Task Force to study and define
- 2 the term "houseboat" in consideration of existing definitions under current law.

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