

2025 -- H 6190

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

J O I N T R E S O L U T I O N

**MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$118,422 FOR RHODE ISLAND PARENT
INFORMATION NETWORK, INC. (RIPIN)**

Introduced By: Representatives Spears, Donovan, Boylan, Speakman, Carson, Fogarty,
McEntee, Morales, Azzinaro, and O'Brien

Date Introduced: April 04, 2025

Referred To: House Finance

1 WHEREAS, The approximately 40,000 Rhode Islanders with coverage through both
2 Medicare and Medicaid, known as “dual-eligible enrollees” or “duals,” are some of the most
3 medically fragile Rhode Islanders; and

4 WHEREAS, Medicare and Medicaid are poorly coordinated programs, coverage options
5 for duals are complex, and transitions in forms of coverage can have serious adverse impacts on
6 duals if significant outside assistance is not available to ensure needed medical services continue;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Approximately 11,500 duals are currently enrolled in the Rhode Island
9 Medicare-Medicaid Plan, operated by Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island as
10 “Neighborhood Integrity,” and a further approximately 13,000 duals are enrolled in other dual-
11 specific Medicare plans (called “dual special needs plans” or “D-SNPs”); and

12 WHEREAS, The Medicare-Medicaid Plan model is no longer supported by the federal
13 government and all existing Medicare-Medicaid Plans, including Neighborhood Integrity, will
14 sunset as of no later than December 31, 2025; and

15 WHEREAS, The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (“EOHHS”) had
16 planned a new managed care duals delivery system model to launch January 1, 2026, and issued a
17 procurement whereby awarded vendors would operate new dual-specific Medicare plans that
18 integrated Medicare and Medicaid benefits within a single plan, but has recently canceled that
19 procurement, leaving the future of the managed care duals delivery system in Rhode Island in a

1 state of confusion and flux; and

2 WHEREAS, RIPIN has operated, since 2016, Rhode Island’s Medicare-Medicaid Dual
3 Ombudsman Program (the “RIPIN Dual Ombudsman”), which helps duals navigate complicated
4 Medicare and Medicaid enrollment rules, Medicaid redeterminations, obstacles to health plan
5 enrollment, claim and prior authorization denials, access to care challenges, provider disputes,
6 and applications for other federally-funded benefit programs; and

7 WHEREAS, The RIPIN Dual Ombudsman is funded through Medicaid administrative
8 matching with half federal Medicaid funding and half state funding, at the amount of \$236,844
9 all-funds (\$118,422 general revenue) per calendar year, serving 437 clients annually, with 4,456
10 individual client interactions, and saving clients \$343,189 in health care costs during FY2024, a
11 better than 1-to-1 return on investment, with a 92% client satisfaction rate; and

12 WHEREAS, The Governor’s proposed fiscal year 2026 budget proposes to terminate
13 funding for the RIPIN Dual Ombudsman as of December 31, 2025, so it only includes funding for
14 operations for half of FY2026 (\$118,422 all-funds, \$59,211 general revenue); and

15 WHEREAS, With an additional \$59,211 in general revenue above the Governor’s
16 FY2026 proposal, the RIPIN Dual Ombudsman program could operate at current capacity for the
17 whole fiscal year; and

18 WHEREAS, Without the RIPIN Dual Ombudsman, there will be no dedicated resource to
19 assist duals, and the sunset of that program would coincide with the largest system transition in
20 the history of Rhode Island’s managed care duals delivery system; and

21 WHEREAS, Continued funding for the RIPIN Dual Ombudsman is in keeping with the
22 EOHHS Mission Statement “to foster and strengthen a community-driven, equitable,
23 comprehensive, responsive, and high-quality health and human services system in Rhode Island”;
24 now therefore be it

25 RESOLVED, That there is hereby appropriated, out of any money in the treasury not
26 otherwise appropriated for the fiscal year 2025-2026, the total sum of \$118,422 in general
27 revenue to RIPIN to continue the operation of the RIPIN Dual Ombudsman, with the expectation
28 that such funds will be matched by federal Medicaid funds; and the state controller is hereby
29 authorized and directed to draw their orders upon the general treasurer for the payment of said
30 sum, upon receipt of properly authenticated vouchers.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
JOINT RESOLUTION
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$118,422 FOR RHODE ISLAND PARENT
INFORMATION NETWORK, INC. (RIPIN)

- 1 This resolution authorizes the appropriation of the sum of \$118,422 for RIPIN to
- 2 continue the operation of the RIPIN Dual Ombudsman.

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