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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CREATING A PERMANENT COMMISSION ON CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS AND
SOLUTIONS

Introduced By: Representatives Cortvriend, Spears, and Boylan

Date Introduced: January 28, 2026

Referred To: House Environment and Natural Resources

1 WHEREAS, The State of Rhode Island faces significant challenges due to climate
2 change, including increased frequency of storms, riverine flooding, sea level rise, property losses
3 and loss of natural resources including beach erosion; and

4 WHEREAS, These challenges pose serious economic threats to the State, including loss
5 of property taxes, increased stormwater management costs, and potential damage to
6 infrastructure; and

7 WHEREAS, It is imperative to thoroughly and continuously examine the impacts of
8 climate change on the State and explore potential solutions to mitigate these impacts; now,
9 therefore be it

10 RESOLVED, That a permanent legislative commission on climate change impacts and
11 solutions be and the same is hereby created consisting of eighteen (18) members:

12 Three (3) of whom shall be members of the House of Representatives, not more than two
13 (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall
14 be a Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Officer, to be appointed by the
15 Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the Director of Statewide Planning, or designee; one
16 of whom shall be the Director of the Coastal Resources Management Council, or designee; one of
17 whom shall be a member of the Coastal Resilience and Extension Coastal Resources Center & RI
18 Sea Grant, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be a member from the
19 RI Coastal Institute, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the

1 Director of the Institute at Brown for Environment and Society, or designee; one of whom shall
2 be a representative from the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank, to be appointed by the Speaker of
3 the House; one of whom shall be a representative from the RI Rivers Council, to be appointed by
4 the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be a Tax Assessor from a coastal community, to be
5 appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the Executive Director of the
6 League of Cities & Towns, or designee; one of whom shall be a member of the Rhode Island
7 Society of Environmental Professionals, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of
8 whom shall be a member of the Environmental Business Council of New England/RI, to be
9 appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be a member of the RI Realtors
10 Association, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be a member of the
11 RI Builders Association, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and one of whom shall be
12 a representative from a geotechnical, environmental management firm, to be appointed by the
13 Speaker of the House.

14 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a legislative study
15 commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly resolution, the appointing
16 authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu of a legislator; provided
17 that, the Majority Leader or the Minority Leader of the political party which is entitled to the
18 appointment, consents to the member of the general public.

19 The purpose of said commission shall be to conduct a continuous, ongoing, and
20 comprehensive study on the issues confronting the State of Rhode Island due to climate change
21 including, but not limited to:

- 22 (1) Sea level rise and its impacts on coastal municipalities;
- 23 (2) Riverine flooding and its effects on inland areas and municipalities;
- 24 (3) Beach erosion and its economic consequences;
- 25 (4) Loss of property taxes and other revenue streams;
- 26 (5) Increased costs associated with stormwater management;
- 27 (6) Infrastructure vulnerabilities to climate-related hazards;
- 28 (7) Funding mechanisms for implementation of resilience programs;
- 29 (8) Impacts on waterfront property and business owners.

30 In addition, the Commission shall examine various adaptation and mitigation strategies,
31 including:

- 32 (1) Beach nourishment projects;
- 33 (2) Shoreline hardening measures;
- 34 (3) Managed retreat policies;

- 1 (4) Implementation of green infrastructure solutions; and
- 2 (5) Collaboration with federal and municipal agencies to address climate-related
- 3 challenges.

4 RESOLVED, The Commission shall conduct public hearings and solicit input from

5 stakeholders including, but not limited to: government agencies, environmental organizations,

6 business associations, academic institutions, and community groups.

7 The Commission shall analyze the economic, environmental, and social implications of

8 different adaptation and mitigation and resilience strategies, considering both short-term and

9 long-term impacts, and explore how Rhode Island should administratively organize to meet the

10 full scope of the challenge.

11 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet

12 at the call of the Speaker of the House and organize and shall select a chairperson.

13 Vacancies in said commission shall be filled in like manner as the original appointment.

14 The membership of said commission shall receive no compensation for their services.

15 All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish such advice and information,

16 documentary and otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or

17 desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of this resolution.

18 The Speaker of the House is hereby authorized and directed to provide suitable quarters

19 for the commission.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
HOUSE RESOLUTION
CREATING A PERMANENT COMMISSION ON CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS AND
SOLUTIONS

- 1 This House resolution would establish a permanent commission on climate change
- 2 impacts and solutions.

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