

2026 -- H 8203

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LC005147
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THAT A CONDITION PRECEDENT BE PLACED ON ALL FUTURE STATE
FUNDING OR GRANT ASSISTANCE TO BROWN UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND
AFFILIATED ENTITIES TO ENSURE MAINTENANCE OF THE NEWPORT HOSPITAL
BIRTHING CENTER

Introduced By: Representative Lauren H. Carson

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: House Finance

1 WHEREAS, The Newport Hospital Birthing Center provides vital inpatient labor and
2 delivery services to the community of Newport and surrounding areas, ensuring safe and timely
3 access to hospital-based obstetric care; and

4 WHEREAS, The continuous operation of a hospital-based birthing facility is essential to
5 maternal and neonatal health, including the availability of obstetric physicians, certified nurse
6 midwives, anesthesia services, nursing staff, and neonatal support on a continuous basis; and

7 WHEREAS, The State of Rhode Island, through appropriations, grants, Medicaid
8 payments, supplemental payments, rate enhancements, capital distributions, and other forms of
9 financial assistance, provides significant funding and support to Brown University Health and its
10 affiliated entities, including hospitals; and

11 WHEREAS, It is critical to ensure that state funding is contingent upon the maintenance
12 and operation of essential healthcare services, including hospital-based birthing facilities, to
13 protect public health and access to care; and

14 WHEREAS, For purposes of this resolution, "maintain and operate the Newport Hospital
15 Birthing Center" shall mean:

16 1. Continuous, year-round operation of inpatient labor and delivery services at Newport
17 Hospital, without seasonal, intermittent, or temporary suspension;

18 2. Twenty-four hour, seven-day-per-week availability of hospital-based obstetric

1 services, including on-site or immediately available obstetric physicians, certified nurse
2 midwives, anesthesia services, nursing staff, and neonatal support consistent with safe delivery
3 standards;

4 3. Staffing levels sufficient to support safe and timely deliveries, including emergency
5 obstetric care, without diversion, routine transfer, or redirection of patients to other facilities due
6 to staffing limitations;

7 4. No reduction in the scope of services offered at the Birthing Center including, but not
8 limited to:

9 (i) Elimination of inpatient labor and delivery;

10 (ii) Conversion to outpatient-only, triage-only, or stabilization-only services;

11 (iii) Routine diversion of laboring patients to other hospitals;

12 (iv) Restrictions that effectively require planned deliveries to occur off-island; and

13 5. No administrative, financial, or operational action that renders the Birthing Center
14 functionally unavailable to the community it serves, regardless of whether the facility remains
15 nominally "open"; and

16 WHEREAS, Brown University Health and its affiliated entities shall certify compliance
17 with this condition to the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the Rhode Island
18 Department of Health, and the House and Senate Fiscal Advisors prior to the release of any state
19 funds, annually thereafter, and within ten (10) days of any change that could reasonably affect
20 compliance; and

21 WHEREAS, Failure to comply with this condition shall result in the immediate cessation
22 of all state fund distributions and may trigger recoupment of funds distributed during periods of
23 noncompliance, and no waiver, emergency exception, or administrative approval shall supersede
24 this requirement unless explicitly authorized by the General Assembly; and

25 WHEREAS, This condition shall remain in effect as a continuing requirement for all
26 fiscal years following the passage of this resolution unless expressly repealed by the General
27 Assembly;

28 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
29 requests that a condition precedent be placed on all future state funds, grants, supplemental
30 payments, rate enhancements, Medicaid payments, capital distributions, or any other form of
31 financial assistance to Brown University Health and any affiliated entity requiring that the
32 Newport Hospital Birthing Center remain fully operational in accordance with the standards set
33 forth above; and be it further

34 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is directed to transmit duly

- 1 certified copies of this resolution to the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the
- 2 Rhode Island Department of Health, Brown University Health, and the leadership of all affiliated
- 3 entities.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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

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FUNDING OR GRANT ASSISTANCE TO BROWN UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND
AFFILIATED ENTITIES TO ENSURE MAINTENANCE OF THE NEWPORT HOSPITAL
BIRTHING CENTER

- 1 This resolution would condition the distribution of any state funds to Brown University
- 2 Health on the continued operation of a birthing center in the city of Newport.

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