

2026 -- S 3068

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

AFFIRMING THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND'S COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING
WOMEN IN THE BUILDING TRADES AND EXPANDING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO
CAREERS IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

Introduced By: Senators Lawson, Gallo, Felag, Ujifusa, Murray, Rogers, Vargas, Britto,
Acosta, and Raptakis

Date Introduced: March 12, 2026

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, Women comprise approximately one-half of the population of the United
2 States and the State of Rhode Island, yet remain significantly underrepresented in the construction
3 workforce, accounting for 4.3% of the industry; and

4 WHEREAS, National apprenticeship data from 2023 demonstrated continued racial and
5 gender disparities within the construction trades; and

6 WHEREAS, Careers in the unionized construction industry provide family-sustaining
7 wages and benefits that rival or exceed those of many professions requiring a four-year college
8 degree, with the median annual wage for construction occupations in Rhode Island exceeding
9 sixty-five thousand dollars (\$65,000) in 2024; and

10 WHEREAS, Across all jobs in the United States, women earn, on average, nearly eighty-
11 three cents (\$0.83) for every dollar a man makes. In construction, women are not subject to this
12 same gender pay gap. All construction workers, regardless of gender, are paid the same wages
13 and benefits as outlined in their collective bargaining agreements; and

14 WHEREAS, Registered apprenticeship programs provide proven opportunities to earn
15 money while you learn pathways to financial security for workers and their families, and
16 economic mobility without the burden of excessive student loan debt, which is disproportionately
17 borne by women; and

18 WHEREAS, Women continue to encounter structural barriers to entering, remaining, and
19 advancing in the construction industry, including limited access to training opportunities; and

1 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Building and Construction Trades Council and its
2 affiliated Local Unions, have made meaningful progress in creating pathways for women in the
3 unionized construction industry through pre-apprenticeship programs, such as Building Futures,
4 registered apprenticeship programs, and the work of the Rhode Island Building Trades Women’s
5 Council; and

6 WHEREAS, The State of Rhode Island has invested significant public resources in
7 workforce development initiatives, including Real Jobs Rhode Island and registered
8 apprenticeship expansion programs aligned with the State’s Rhode to Prosperity workforce goals,
9 which have demonstrated success in increasing participation of women and people of color in
10 high-wage construction careers; and

11 WHEREAS, It is in the best interests of the State to ensure that publicly funded capital
12 and infrastructure projects promote high-road labor standards and equitable access to employment
13 opportunities; now, therefore be it

14 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby affirms its
15 commitment to supporting women in the building trades and to expanding equal employment
16 opportunity and economic equity for women and all Rhode Islanders; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the State affirms its commitment to continue to prioritize construction
18 investments that transform not only the State’s infrastructure but also its workforce by providing
19 family-sustaining wages, benefits, and safe working conditions; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That this Senate supports the continued efforts of the Rhode Island
21 Building and Construction Trades Council and its affiliated Local Unions to recruit, train, and
22 retain women in the construction industry; and be it further

23 RESOLVED, That this Senate affirms that publicly funded capital and infrastructure
24 projects should strengthen and diversify the State’s workforce through the use of high-road labor
25 standards, including project labor agreements, apprenticeship utilizations, workforce reporting
26 requirements, and appropriate project monitoring and oversight; and be it further

27 RESOLVED, That this Senate expects contractors seeking to do business with the State
28 are committed to creating access to good-paying job opportunities, to adopt and enforce anti-
29 discrimination and anti-harassment policies, and to take proactive measures to ensure safe,
30 respectful, and inclusive worksites where all Rhode Islanders can thrive; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
32 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Rhode Island Building and Construction

1 Trades Council and its Women's Council.

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