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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

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J O I N T   R E S O L U T I O N

CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE ENTIRE AREA  
OF LAND USE, PRESERVATION, DEVELOPMENT AND REGULATION

Introduced By: Representatives Shekarchi, O'Brien, Noret, McEntee, and Carson

Date Introduced: February 26, 2020

Referred To: House Judiciary

1           WHEREAS, Rhode Island is the smallest state in terms of its geographical surface land  
2 area, which makes this surface land area an important resource; and

3           WHEREAS, It is important for Rhode Island to address issues of land use, preservation,  
4 development, and regulation in a way that properly manages the use of this important resource to  
5 insure and promote land use which allows for both growth and sustainability; and

6           WHEREAS, Rhode Island, like most of the nation, is facing a shortage of affordable  
7 housing; and land use regulations, particularly zoning ordinances, have a major impact on the  
8 availability of affordable and decent housing; and

9           WHEREAS, The implications of global warming and climate change on land use  
10 planning are becoming more consequential to our state each year; and

11           WHEREAS, At this time, it is appropriate for the General Assembly to undertake a broad  
12 based review of comprehensive land use in this state; now, therefore, be it

13           RESOLVED, That a special joint commission be and the same is hereby created  
14 consisting of twenty-three (23) members: one of whom shall be a member of the Rhode Island  
15 Housing Board of Commissioners, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom  
16 shall be employed with the Division of Statewide Planning, to be appointed by the Speaker of the  
17 House; one of whom shall be a representative of the real estate industry, to be appointed by the  
18 Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be a representative of an environmental group, to be  
19 appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be a municipal planner, to be

1 appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be an attorney with land use expertise,  
2 to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; six (6) of whom shall be members of the public,  
3 who, whenever possible, shall be competent by training or experience in the fields of solar  
4 energy, offshore wind power, civil engineering, land surveying, commerce, or who are  
5 representatives from Save the Bay, the Department of Environmental Management, the Audubon  
6 Society of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council, or Grow  
7 Smart Rhode Island, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be a  
8 municipal planner, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom shall be an  
9 attorney with land use expertise, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom  
10 shall be a representative of the building trades industry, to be appointed by the President of the  
11 Senate; one of whom shall be a representative of an environmental group, to be appointed by the  
12 President of the Senate; one of whom shall be a representative from a city zoning board, to be  
13 appointed by the President of the Senate; and six (6) of whom shall be members of the public,  
14 who, whenever possible, shall be competent by training or experience in the fields of solar  
15 energy, offshore wind power, civil engineering, land surveying, commerce, or who are  
16 representatives from Save the Bay, the department of environmental management, the Audubon  
17 Society of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council, or Grow  
18 Smart Rhode Island, to be appointed by the President of the Senate.

19 The purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study of the entire  
20 area of land use, preservation, development, and regulation, and to undertake a broad based  
21 review of comprehensive land use in the state, and provide recommendations, based upon this  
22 study and review, that will enable the state to ensure and promote land use which allows for both  
23 growth and sustainability.

24 Forthwith upon the passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet  
25 at the call of the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate and organize and shall each  
26 select a co-chairperson.

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

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

29 All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish such advice and information,  
30 documentary and otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or  
31 desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of this resolution.

32 The Joint Committee on Legislative Services is hereby authorized and directed to provide  
33 suitable quarters for said commission; and be it further

34 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the

- 1 General Assembly on or before April 30, 2021, and said commission shall expire on June 30,
- 2 2021.

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