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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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

**RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE RHODE ISLAND DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES COUNCIL EXAMINE AND REFINE ITS CURRENT POLICIES AND
PRACTICES FOR THE ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PROTECTION
AND ADVOCACY SYSTEMS**

Introduced By: Senators Ottiano, DiPalma, Goldin, Miller, and Gallo

Date Introduced: February 12, 2014

Referred To: Senate Health & Human Services

- 1 WHEREAS, The following principles and core values should serve to guide the focus of
2 community services/supports for adults with developmental disabilities in Rhode Island:
- 3 • Each person is unique with individual interests, strengths and needs; support and
4 services are responsive to the individual and his/her particular situation;
 - 5 • All of us develop and grow within a community of personal relationships; support and
6 services help build friendships and relationships with various people who are involved in our
7 personal lives;
 - 8 • Each person is treated with dignity and respect and is deserving of a meaningful life in
9 the community that offers a variety of individual choices that affect his/her own life/future and
10 opportunities to reach his/her fullest potential; we strive to meet the highest standards of personal
11 and professional integrity in order to assure each person has a good quality of life;
 - 12 • The supports/services that the individual receives shall be provided in a safe
13 environment and in the least restrictive manner;
 - 14 • There is equity and fairness to all stakeholders;
 - 15 • There is the capacity to accommodate new people within the system of services/support
16 without waiting lists;
 - 17 • The Division of Developmental Disabilities will be a catalyst in the shift of decision-
18 making to individuals with disabilities and their families regarding the choice of agency and the

1 supports provided. Innovative and cost-effective programs will require new ways of thinking,
2 including adaptive changes in our practice and organizational structure and increased
3 opportunities to access community resources available to all citizens;

4 • There is a continued investment and responsible management of growth and stability in
5 the system;

6 • Security, stability and resources are provided for individuals by supporting them in their
7 natural environment with their families for as long as possible;

8 • The system of services/support must have the capacity to respond to individuals with
9 extraordinary and/or emergency needs;

10 • Collaboration and partnerships among the stakeholders have been and will continue to
11 be an integral component of the accomplishments within the developmental disability community
12 system;

13 • Direct service staff should have a good working wage to ensure continuity, stability and
14 quality of support for people; and

15 • The Division of Developmental Disabilities should be accountable to individuals with
16 developmental disabilities, their families, the citizens of this State, and to one another; and

17 WHEREAS, There is a bewildering array of entities responsible for adults with
18 developmental disabilities protection and advocacy, including, but not limited to, the:

- 19 • Commission for Human Rights;
- 20 • Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing;
- 21 • Department of the Attorney General;
- 22 • Developmental Disabilities Council;
- 23 • Elder Protective Services of the Division of Elderly Affairs;
- 24 • Governor's Commission on Disabilities;
- 25 • Long-Term Care Ombudsperson;
- 26 • Mental Health Advocate;
- 27 • Office of Quality Assurance of the Department of Behavioral Healthcare,
28 Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals, and
- 29 • Rhode Island Disability Law Center; and

30 WHEREAS, In the middle of stressful individual/family crisis people have difficulty
31 determining which advocate(s) to go to for assistance to ensure those principles and core values
32 are being provided to every adult with developmental disabilities; and

33 WHEREAS, Rhode Island must ensure that the adults with developmental disabilities
34 protection and advocacy system(s) in place continues to improve and enhance supports for our

1 adults with disabilities, and assure that these supports are as robust as they can be; now, therefore
2 be it

3 RESOLVED, That this General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island and Providence
4 Plantations hereby respectfully requests that the RI Developmental Disabilities Council convenes
5 a meeting of adults with developmental disabilities protection and advocacy entities and other
6 stakeholders to:

7 • Clarify the roles of each adult with developmental disabilities protection and advocacy
8 entity;

9 • Identify gaps in the current adults with developmental disabilities protection and
10 advocacy system(s);

11 • Examine best policies and practices in the adults with developmental disabilities
12 protection and advocacy system(s);

13 • Identify whether and how Rhode Island's policies and practices can be refined in light
14 of excellent adults with developmental disabilities protection and advocacy models, including,
15 but not limited to:

16 • Develop a model memorandum of agreements amongst adults with developmental
17 disabilities protection and advocacy, that includes guidelines for:

18 1. Effective communications to complainants regarding the status of complaints handled
19 by more than one adult with developmental disabilities protection and advocacy entity;

20 2. An outreach and public awareness program targeted at the adults with developmental
21 disabilities, their families and supports;

22 3. An adults with developmental disabilities "friendly" website focused on the adults with
23 developmental disabilities protection and advocacy system(s);

24 4. Publicizing the § 40-8.5-2(e) statewide toll free, twenty-four (24) hour a day, seven (7)
25 days quality assurance hotline operated by the department of behavioral healthcare,
26 developmental disabilities and hospitals, and the § 42-66-8 statewide toll free, twenty-four (24)
27 hour a day, seven (7) days a week telephone line, to report abuse, neglect, exploitation and self-
28 neglect of the elderly; and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That this General Assembly hereby respectfully requests that the RI
30 Developmental Disabilities Council provides a written report to the General Assembly on or
31 before January 5, 2015, regarding its policies and practices; and be it further

32 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
33 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Governor, the Attorney General, the
34 Chairperson of the Developmental Disabilities Council, the Secretary of the Executive Office of

1 Health and Human Services, the Director of the Department of Behavioral Healthcare,
2 Developmental Disabilities, and Hospitals, the Director of the Department of Human Services;
3 the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Disability Law Center; the Long-Term Care
4 Ombudsperson, the Mental Health Advocate, and the Chairpersons of the Commission for Human
5 Rights; Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; and Governor's Commission on
6 Disabilities.

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