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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THAT THE RHODE ISLAND COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
COUNCIL UNDERTAKE A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF PERMITTING ADDITIONAL  
CONFINED AREA DISPOSAL CELLS AS PART OF ITS GENERAL MAINTENANCE  
DREDGING POLICY PROGRAM

Introduced By: Senators Bates, Ruggerio, Goodwin, Walaska, and Sosnowski

Date Introduced: February 16, 2012

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

1           WHEREAS, Some of Rhode Island's greatest resources exist in its ports, marine  
2 businesses, and general maritime economy; and

3           WHEREAS, The maritime economy in Rhode Island includes over 500 businesses,  
4 employs over 6,400 people, and pays wages in excess of \$273 million, all of which are critical to  
5 the economic and social well-being of the state; and

6           WHEREAS, In 2009, the Rhode Island General Assembly established a Special  
7 Legislative Commission to Study Potential Economic Opportunities in the Development of Port  
8 Facilities in Rhode Island known, as the "Port Commission"; and

9           WHEREAS, The Port Commission has been charged with studying Rhode Island's port  
10 related economy, with the intent of making specific recommendations to better utilize Rhode  
11 Island's coastal resources and unique geographic location, in order to create employment  
12 opportunities for those Rhode Islanders currently unemployed or underemployed during the worst  
13 economic downturn since the Great Depression; and

14           WHEREAS, After completing three years of study, including 11 meetings, numerous  
15 visits to each and every commercial port in Rhode Island, and over 40 hours of expert testimony  
16 from 25 maritime witnesses, the Port Commission has learned that:

17           (1) The current confined area disposal cells ("CAD cells") utilized for long-term disposal  
18 of materials unsuitable for offshore disposal are filled to approximately 75 percent of their

1 capacity; and

2 (2) There are three significant maintenance dredging projects pending in the Port of  
3 Providence whose dredged material will fill the current CAD cells to 90 percent of their designed  
4 capacity; and

5 WHEREAS, It is in the best interests of the State of Rhode Island to undertake the  
6 permitting of additional CAD cells, with the ultimate goal of constructing new CAD cells once  
7 the existing ones are filled; and

8 WHEREAS, The potential decrease in the number of available slips and moorings at  
9 marinas, as well as the reduced draft at port facilities throughout the state due to the potential lack  
10 of active CAD cells, will have significant adverse environmental and economic effects on the  
11 state; and

12 WHEREAS, Maintenance dredging is required to remove natural silt accumulations in  
13 order to continue ongoing commercial and recreational maritime activity; and

14 WHEREAS, The “Marine Waterways and Boating Facilities Act 2001” (RIGL 46-6.1)  
15 designated The Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council (“CRMC”) as the lead  
16 state agency charged with coordinating general maintenance dredging policy and programs for  
17 ports, port facilities, channels, harbors, public and private marinas and boating facilities,  
18 recreational facilities, and habitat areas; and

19 WHEREAS, The CRMC was directed to develop, prepare, adopt pursuant to section 46-  
20 23-11, implement, and maintain a comprehensive plan for dredge material management  
21 consistent with the Marine Infrastructure Maintenance Act of 1996; and

22 WHEREAS, It is in the best interests of the state, its cities and towns, and its citizens for  
23 CRMC to include in its general maintenance dredging policy program an in-depth detailed  
24 analysis of the size, scale, scope, and funding needed to complete the permitting process for and  
25 the future construction of replacement CAD disposal cells, so as to not jeopardize the long-term  
26 economic health of the state’s maritime industry; now, therefore be it

27 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and  
28 Providence Plantations hereby requests that the Rhode Island CRMC undertakes this detailed  
29 study and report its findings back to the Governor and House of Representatives no later than  
30 May 1, 2012; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and he hereby is authorized and directed to  
2 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the executive director of the Coastal Resources  
3 Management Council.

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