

2022 -- S 2881

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LC005815
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

JOINT RESOLUTION

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$5,000,000 FROM THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT FUNDS TO THE CITY OF CENTRAL FALLS IN RECOGNITION OF THE DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON CENTRAL FALLS AND THE DISPROPORTIONATELY ARPA FUNDING TO THE CITY

Introduced By: Senator Jonathon Acosta

Date Introduced: April 14, 2022

Referred To: Senate Finance

1 WHEREAS, The funding provided under the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
2 "provides a unique opportunity for state and local governments to make strategic investments in
3 long-lived assets, rebuild reserves to enhance financial stability, and cover temporary operating
4 shortfalls until economic conditions and operations normalize"; and

5 WHEREAS, Central Falls was hit disproportionately hard by COVID and yet received
6 disproportionately less ARPA monies than lesser-hit municipalities because ARPA monies were
7 distributed by population, not by necessity; for example, while Central Falls had the #1 per-capita
8 rate of disease during the pandemic, eighteen cities and towns received more ARPA monies than
9 Central Falls; and

10 WHEREAS, Central Falls consistently experienced the state's highest rates of COVID-19
11 infection and hospitalization, leaving countless families, many of whom are or consist of
12 immigrant and/or low-income households, scrambling for help, and the city's small businesses
13 struggling to stay afloat; and

14 WHEREAS, While the American Rescue Plan Act was designed to spark a strong
15 economic comeback, funds earmarked for Central Falls were determined without regard to the
16 unique challenges presented by the City's density, levels of infection, economic fallout, or other
17 hurdles faced by the City's marginalized community; and

18 WHEREAS, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts faced a similar problem with the

1 small municipalities of Chelsea, Everett, Methuen and Randolph and, in order to “right this
2 wrong,” Governor Baker chose to apportion \$109 million in State ARPA monies directly to these
3 municipalities stating that, “These four communities were disproportionately impacted by the
4 virus, and this additional funding will support critical local COVID response and recovery
5 efforts”; and

6 WHEREAS, It is vitally necessary to also “right this wrong” in Central Falls and
7 appropriate the funds necessary to combat threats to the public health including, but not limited
8 to, pandemic relief, public health outreach, the development of affordable housing, behavioral
9 health supports, substance abuse support and resources for domestic violence; now, therefore be it

10 RESOLVED, That there is hereby appropriated, out of any money from the American
11 Rescue Plan Act in the treasury not otherwise appropriated for the fiscal year 2022-2023, the sum
12 of five million dollars (\$5,000,000) to the City of Central Falls for recovery from the COVID-19
13 pandemic; and the state controller is hereby authorized and directed to draw his orders upon the
14 general treasurer for the payment of said sum, or so much thereof as may be from time to time
15 required, upon receipt of properly authenticated vouchers.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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

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ACT FUNDS TO THE CITY OF CENTRAL FALLS IN RECOGNITION OF THE
DISPROPORTIONATELY HIGH IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON CENTRAL FALLS
AND THE DISPROPORTIONATELY ARPA FUNDING TO THE CITY

- 1 This joint resolution would authorize the appropriation of the sum of \$5,000,000 to the
- 2 City of Central Falls for relief in combating pandemic threats to the City's public health.

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