

2014 -- H 7447

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LC003481
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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

**CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO ASSESS AND MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITH
DYSLEXIA AND/OR READING DISABILITIES**

Introduced By: Representatives Naughton, Valencia, E Coderre, and Marcello

Date Introduced: February 12, 2014

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

1 WHEREAS, Dyslexia is a learning disability that is neurobiological in origin and
2 characterized by difficulties with accurate and fluent word recognition, poor spelling, and poor
3 decoding abilities, resulting in problems with reading comprehension and reduced reading
4 experience that impede the growth of vocabulary and background knowledge; and

5 WHEREAS, Dyslexia is the most common cause of reading, writing and spelling
6 disabilities. According to the U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services, it is estimated that 15
7 percent of American students may have dyslexia. Students with dyslexia often exhibit weaknesses
8 in underlying language skills involving processing of speech sounds (phonological) and print
9 (orthographic) and in building brain pathways that connect speech with print; and

10 WHEREAS, Most students with dyslexia have limited awareness of the speech sounds in
11 spoken words and have difficulty segmenting words into individual phonemes; and

12 WHEREAS, An improved awareness of and support for persons with dyslexia and
13 improved training of educators (including teachers, education administrators, education officials,
14 and other employees providing instruction, assessment, or special services for general,
15 compensatory, gifted, or special education) will help students, including those with dyslexia,
16 obtain the necessary instruction, support, skills, and resources to increase their success in school;
17 now, therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created
19 consisting of seven (7) members: four (4) of whom shall be members of the House of

1 Representatives, not more than three (3) from the same political party, to be appointed by the
2 Speaker of the House; two (2) of whom shall be parents of a child with diagnosed dyslexia, to be
3 appointed by the Speaker of the House; and one of whom shall be the Rhode Island
4 Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, or designee.

5 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a permanent advisory
6 commission, a legislative study commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly
7 resolution, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in lieu
8 of a legislator, provided that the majority leader or the minority leader of the political party which
9 is entitled to the appointment consents to the member of the general public.

10 The purpose of said commission shall be to conduct a comprehensive study of the
11 implications and consequences of dyslexia and to provide a comprehensive report with
12 recommendations to the General Assembly on the educational needs of children with reading
13 disabilities and dyslexia and all aspects of providing education to these children.

14 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet on
15 or before August 2014, and organize and shall select a chairperson from among the legislators.

16 Five (5) members shall constitute a quorum for purposes of approving recommendations
17 and/or the commission report or other action items.

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

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

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

23 The Speaker of the House is hereby authorized and directed to provide suitable quarters
24 for said commission; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the
26 House of Representatives no later than January 30, 2015, and said commission shall expire on
27 March 30, 2015.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO ASSESS AND MAKE
RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITH
DYSLEXIA AND/OR READING DISABILITIES

1 This resolution would create a seven (7) member special legislative study commission
2 whose purpose it would be to make a comprehensive study to improve the educational outcomes
3 for students with dyslexia and/or reading disabilities in the State of Rhode Island, and who would
4 report back to the House of Representatives no later than January 30, 2015, and whose life would
5 expire on March 30, 2015.

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