

2020 -- H 7473

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LC004236
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

HOUSE RESOLUTION

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THAT THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH REQUIRE THAT ALL PRIVATE INSURANCE COMPANIES IN RHODE ISLAND
COVER SMOKING CESSATION PROGRAMS

Introduced By: Representatives Canario, Bennett, Jackson, McLaughlin, and Edwards

Date Introduced: February 06, 2020

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

1 WHEREAS, The Cancer Action Network lists tobacco as the leading cause of
2 preventable death in the United States, with cigarette smoking causing 480,000 deaths annually.
3 Smoking costs the nation \$130 billion annually in medical care costs, and more than \$150 billion
4 in lost productivity; and

5 WHEREAS, According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), most
6 smokers are addicted to nicotine, a drug found naturally in tobacco. More Americans are addicted
7 to nicotine than any other drug and the center's recent research suggests that nicotine may be as
8 addictive as heroin or cocaine; and

9 WHEREAS, The CDC has also reported that approximately seventy percent of smokers
10 want to quit smoking, and about half try to quit annually. However, less than ten percent succeed,
11 in part because less than one-third of smokers trying to quit use proven cessation treatments; and

12 WHEREAS, Unfortunately, many private insurance carriers do not cover smoking
13 cessation programs and others require high out-of-pocket costs which also reduces the number of
14 smokers who are able to try smoking cessation programs; and

15 WHEREAS, The CDC recommends that all insurance programs include comprehensive
16 coverage for all evidence-based cessation treatments, including counseling and over-the-counter
17 and prescription medications. The CDC further recommends that all such plans include
18 individual, group and telephone counseling, and cover at least two quit attempts per year; and

19 WHEREAS, Quitting smoking offers a plethora of health benefits to individuals. Quitting

1 smoking lowers one's risk of getting lung cancer and numerous other types of cancer, reduces the
2 risk of heart disease within one to two years of quitting, reduces respiratory symptoms and the
3 risk of developing COPD, and reduces the risk of infertility for women; now, therefore be it

4 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and
5 Providence Plantations hereby respectfully requests that the Rhode Island Department of Health
6 requires that all private insurance companies in Rhode Island cover smoking cessation programs;
7 and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
9 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable Gina M. Raimondo, Governor of
10 the State of Rhode Island, and to Director Nicole Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH, Rhode Island
11 Department of Health.

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