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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

CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY AND ASSESS RHODE ISLAND'S "FAIR FUNDING FORMULA"

Introduced By: Representatives O`Grady, Tomasso, Tanzi, Amore, and Cimini

Date Introduced: March 04, 2014

Referred To: House Finance

1 WHEREAS, On June 10, 2010, the General Assembly enacted its first major school
2 funding reform in almost 20 years. The Governor signed the legislation on June 23, 2010; and

3 WHEREAS, The initiative was both a major policy shift and a major step forward. It
4 established a rational system for allocating state educational support among local districts by
5 basing that allocation on school population, and further adjusting that figure to account for
6 community wealth, tax base stability, and number of disadvantaged students; and

7 WHEREAS, This initiative aimed to provide for stable and predictable funding to Local
8 Educational Agencies (LEAs) to establish sustainable finances moving forward. While the 2010
9 General Assembly went to great lengths to address the inequities between LEAs that developed in
10 the absence of a standard formula, it is incumbent upon the current General Assembly to assess
11 that legislation to ensure that new inequities have not emerged as unintended consequences; now,
12 therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created
14 consisting of fifteen (15) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the House, not more
15 than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the Speaker; three (3) of whom
16 shall be members of the Senate, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be
17 appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom shall be a RIDE staff member, to be
18 appointed by the Rhode Island Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education; one of
19 whom shall be the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Mayoral Academies (RIMA); one of

1 whom shall be Director of the Met School, or designee; one of whom shall be the Executive
2 Director of the Rhode Island League of Charter Schools, or designee; one of whom shall be the
3 Executive Director of the Rhode Island School Superintendents' Association, or designee; one of
4 whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, or designee; one of
5 whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island Chapter of the American Federation of Teachers,
6 or designee; one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island Chapter of the National
7 Education Association, or designee; and one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island
8 Association of School Committees (RIASC), or designee.

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

14 The purpose of said commission shall be to make a comprehensive study and assess
15 Rhode Island's "Fair Funding Formula" (FFF), including, but not limited to:

- 16 • Type of expenses funded by the "local appropriation to education from property taxes"
17 as found in § 16-7.2-5(a), and the extent to which those expenses are fixed or variable;
- 18 • Type of expenses funded by the "state share of the permanent foundation education aid"
19 as referenced in § 16-7.2-5(a), and the extent to which those expenses are fixed or variable;
- 20 • Extent to which the total per pupil charter funding obligation shared by the state and
21 LEA is inline with the mandated FFF percentages;
- 22 • Extent to which funding for expenses borne exclusively by LEAs is shifted to charters
23 via provisions of § 16-7.2-5(a);
- 24 • Extent to which charter tuition obligations differ between communities; and
- 25 • Extent to which provisions of § 16-7.2-5(a) impact LEA out-year sustainability.

26 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at
27 the call of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House and organize. The President
28 of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall each select one member to serve as co-
29 chairpersons of the commission.

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

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

32 All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish such advice and information,
33 documentary and otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or
34 desirable by the commission to facilitate the purpose of this resolution.

1 The Joint Committee on Legislative Services is hereby authorized and directed to provide
2 suitable quarters for said commission; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and results to the General
4 Assembly on or before January 27, 2015, and said commission shall expire on March 27, 2015.

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