

2011 -- S 0571

LC01999

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2011

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND HOUSING  
RESOURCES ACT OF 1998

Introduced By: Senators Pichardo, Tassoni, Perry, Goodwin, and Crowley

Date Introduced: March 10, 2011

Referred To: Senate Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 42-128-8 of the General Laws in Chapter 42-128 entitled "Rhode  
2 Island Housing Resources Act of 1998" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **42-128-8. Powers and duties.** -- In order to provide housing opportunities for all Rhode  
4 Islanders, to maintain the quality of housing in Rhode Island, and to coordinate and make  
5 effective the housing responsibilities of the agencies and subdivisions of the state, the  
6 commission shall have the following powers and duties:

7 (1) Policy, planning and coordination of state housing functions. - The commission shall  
8 have the power and duty:

9 (i) To prepare and adopt the state's plans for housing; provided, however, that this  
10 provision shall not be interpreted to contravene the prerogative of the state planning council to  
11 adopt a state guide plan for housing.

12 (ii) To prepare, adopt, and issue the state's housing policy.

13 (iii) To conduct research on and make reports regarding housing issues in the state.

14 (iv) To advise the governor and general assembly on housing issues and to coordinate  
15 housing activities among government agencies and agencies created by state law or providing  
16 housing services under government programs.

17 (2) Establish, implement, and monitor state performance measures and guidelines for  
18 housing programs. - The commission shall have the power and the duty:

1 (i) To promulgate performance measures and guidelines for housing programs conducted  
2 under state law.

3 (ii) To monitor and evaluate housing responsibilities established by state law, and to  
4 establish a process for annual reporting on the outcomes of the programs and investments of the  
5 state in housing for low and moderate income people.

6 (iii) To hear and resolve disputes pertaining to housing issues.

7 (3) Administer the programs pertaining to housing resources that may be assigned by  
8 state law. - The commission shall have the power and duty to administer programs for housing,  
9 housing services, and community development, including, but not limited to, programs pertaining  
10 to:

11 (i) Abandoned properties and the remediation of blighting conditions.

12 (ii) Lead abatement and to manage a lead hazard abatement program in cooperation with  
13 the Rhode Island housing and mortgage finance corporation.

14 (iii) Services for the homeless.

15 (iv) Rental assistance.

16 (v) Community development.

17 (vi) Outreach, education and technical assistance services.

18 (vii) Assistance, including financial support, to non-profit organizations and community  
19 development corporations.

20 (viii) Tax credits that assist in the provision of housing or foster community development  
21 or that result in support to non-profit organizations performing functions to accomplish the  
22 purposes of this chapter.

23 (ix) The Supportive Services Program, the purpose of which is to help prevent and end  
24 homelessness among those who have experienced long-term homelessness and for whom certain  
25 services in addition to housing are essential. State funding for this program may leverage other  
26 resources for the purpose of providing supportive services. Services provided pursuant to this  
27 subsection may include, but not be limited to: assistance with budgeting and paying rent; access  
28 to employment; encouraging tenant involvement in facility management and policies; medication  
29 monitoring and management; daily living skills related to food, housekeeping and socialization;  
30 counseling to support self-identified goals; referrals to mainstream health, mental health and  
31 treatment programs; and conflict resolution.

32 (x) The neighborhood opportunities program, the purpose of which shall be to address the  
33 housing and revitalization needs of the state's deteriorating neighborhoods. The neighborhood  
34 opportunities program shall provide financial assistance to implement the following three (3)

1 components:

2 (A) The family affordable housing program, the purpose of which shall be to produce an  
3 additional supply of housing units at rents affordable to families working at or near minimum  
4 wage. State funding will leverage other resources for the production of housing, to create mixed  
5 income housing, and to revitalize neighborhoods through the rehabilitation of existing  
6 substandard units.

7 (B) The permanent supportive housing program, the purpose of which shall be to produce  
8 additional housing for disabled individuals to be coupled with services and case management to  
9 stabilize homeless individuals in permanent housing at affordable rents for persons receiving  
10 supplemental social security income (SSI).

11 (C) The neighborhood revitalization program, the purpose of which shall be to provide  
12 grants to local communities for renovation, demolition, and homeownership opportunities in  
13 neighborhoods designated for revitalization.

14 SECTION 2. There is hereby appropriated out of any money in the treasury not  
15 otherwise appropriated for the fiscal year 2011-2012, the sum of seven million, five hundred  
16 thousand dollars (\$7,500,000) for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this act, and the  
17 state controller is hereby authorized to draw his orders upon the general treasurer for the payment  
18 of said sum, or so much thereof as may be from time to time required, upon receipt by him/her of  
19 properly authenticated vouchers.

20 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND HOUSING  
RESOURCES ACT OF 1998

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- 1           This act would establish and fund the neighborhood opportunities program to address the
- 2 housing and revitalization needs of the state's deteriorating neighborhoods.
- 3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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