

2011 -- S 0963

LC02588

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2011

SENATE RESOLUTION

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE RHODE ISLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO
AMEND THE STATE FUNDING FORMULA

Introduced By: Senators Walaska, Lynch, and McCaffrey

Date Introduced: May 12, 2011

Referred To: Senate Finance

1 WHEREAS, Current state law provides for a funding formula for education; and

2 WHEREAS, School districts, cities, and towns have seen a calamitous reduction of state
3 aid; and

4 WHEREAS, There exists a \$300 million dollar revenue/expenditure gap in the Fiscal
5 Year 2012 budget and more than \$411 million is projected as a revenue/expenditure gap by Fiscal
6 Year 2016, contributing to further state aid reductions; and

7 WHEREAS, Taxpayers are already burdened by some of the highest property taxes
8 nationally; and

9 WHEREAS, School districts, cities, and towns must comply with Rhode Island General
10 Law, Section 44-5-2, that caps the property tax levy for Fiscal Year 2012 at 4 ¼ percent; and

11 WHEREAS, According to Rhode Island General Law, Section 16-2-9(d), “The school
12 committee of each school district shall be responsible for maintaining a school budget which does
13 not result in a debt”; and

14 WHEREAS, The current funding formula proposed by the Rhode Island Department of
15 Elementary and Secondary Education is scheduled to be implemented effective July 1, 2011, for a
16 period of ten school years; and

17 WHEREAS, The Warwick Public School District has over ten thousand students; and

18 WHEREAS, The state funding formula will only provide the Warwick Public Schools,
19 the third largest school district by student population, with a per pupil allocation of \$3286.08 per

1 year, while seventeen other districts receive a higher per pupil allocation; and

2 WHEREAS, If state funds are allocated based on the number of students in Warwick,
3 Warwick's share of the state funding formula would be approximately \$54 million rather than the
4 approximate \$33 million that Warwick currently expects to receive in Fiscal Year 2012; and

5 WHEREAS, The state funding formula does not treat the Warwick Public Schools
6 equitably as compared to other school districts, and therefore places an undue burden on Warwick
7 taxpayers for the next ten years; and

8 WHEREAS, The state funding formula unfairly short changes the Warwick Public
9 School students; now, therefore be it

10 RESOLVED, That the Warwick School Committee respectfully requests the Rhode
11 Island General Assembly to amend the current state funding formula in favor of a straight per
12 pupil allocation; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and he hereby is authorized and directed to
14 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to every Rhode Island Municipality, School
15 Committee, State Senator, State Representative, and the Governor, Lincoln D. Chafee.

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