

2017 -- S 0981

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

SENATE RESOLUTION

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION TO ISSUE A
REPORT INDICATING HOW UTILITIES SHOULD ENCOURAGE THE DEPLOYMENT OF
ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Introduced By: Senators Miller, Felag, Conley, and Sosnowski

Date Introduced: June 21, 2017

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, The Resilient Rhode Island Act of 2014 established goals for the reduction
2 of statewide greenhouse gas emissions from 1990 levels by 10 percent in 2020, 45 percent in
3 2035, and 80 percent in 2050; and

4 WHEREAS, According to the recent Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council's
5 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan (Plan), Rhode Island is on track to meet the Resilient
6 RI target for the year 2020 but not for 2035 or 2050; and

7 WHEREAS, The Plan finds that the transportation sector is the largest greenhouse gas
8 (GHG) contributor in Rhode Island and achieving the 2050 target would likely require 76 percent
9 of on-road vehicle miles traveled to be electrified; and

10 WHEREAS, The Plan details how electric vehicles produce a GHG reduction benefit due
11 to the inherent efficiency of the motor and drivetrain as well as the relatively cleaner emissions
12 profile. This GHG reduction benefit increases over time as the electricity supply shifts toward
13 higher clean energy penetration; and

14 WHEREAS, Plug-in electric vehicles (PEVs) have tremendous potential to reduce
15 residents' and businesses' expenditures on imported gasoline and diesel in addition to advancing
16 the state's clean energy and climate goals. There is an urgent need for the State of Rhode Island to
17 provide clear guidance for PEV owners, utilities, regulators, third-party providers, and other
18 stakeholders, and to facilitate and prepare for large-scale PEV adoption in a manner that provides
19 consumer and environmental benefits to the maximum extent possible; and

1 WHEREAS, The Transportation & Climate Initiative, a regional collaboration of 12
2 Northeast and Mid-Atlantic jurisdictions that seeks to develop the clean energy economy and
3 reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the transportation sector, cites a Pike Research survey
4 highlighting that the Providence-New Bedford-Fall River metropolitan area is likely to have high
5 penetration rates or absolute sales of electric vehicles relative to the national average; and

6 WHEREAS, Rhode Island's electric vehicle charging infrastructure now includes over 75
7 Level 2 (240 volt) electric vehicle supply stations; and

8 WHEREAS, The United States Department of Transportation recently designated the
9 Interstate 95 highway as an alternative fuel corridor and this designation is expected to both
10 accelerate private investment in electric vehicle infrastructure and bring additional federal support
11 to the region in the future; and

12 WHEREAS, Increasing the use of electricity for transportation through the large-scale
13 adoption of PEVs represents a significant opportunity to further important state policy goals to
14 reduce transportation expenditure on imported gasoline and diesel, boost economic activity by
15 keeping more of our energy dollars in state, diversify our transportation fuel networks, reduce
16 greenhouse gas pollution, modernize the electric grid, and reduce criteria air pollutants; and

17 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (RIPUC) is well suited to
18 consider and make recommendations regarding the structural reforms necessary to ensure that
19 PEVs are integrated into the electric system in a manner that enhances distribution system
20 reliability, minimizes costs, and protects consumers; now, therefore be it

21 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
22 hereby respectfully requests that the RIPUC submit a report to the Governor, Senate President,
23 and Speaker of the House on or before November 30, 2017, to develop a regulatory framework to
24 establish principles and guidance for standards that must be met by a utility seeking to invest
25 ratepayer funds in electric vehicle infrastructure; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
27 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission.

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