

2014 -- S 3125

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

SENATE RESOLUTION

**CREATING THE "SPECIAL SENATE TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE EVALUATION AND
CERTIFICATION OF FOREIGN-TRAINED PROFESSIONALS"**

Introduced By: Senator Juan M.Pichardo

Date Introduced: June 18, 2014

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, Each year, countless immigrants come to Rhode Island with training and
2 professional certifications from their country of origin but cannot practice their profession
3 because they lack similar certification from the state; and

4 WHEREAS, Among these individuals are trained pharmacists, nurses, and doctors who
5 cannot practice due to a lack of US and RI certifications; and

6 WHEREAS, Helping such professionals obtain in-state certification can help address the
7 great need for talented health professionals in Rhode Island, particularly those with cultural and
8 language competencies; and

9 WHEREAS, Helping other similarly-certified professionals can help close labor
10 shortages in other industries, such as the skilled trades and manufacturing; and

11 WHEREAS, Proper review and certification processes for foreign-trained
12 professionals can help ensure professional competency and protect public health and well-being
13 as well as provide a real economic benefit to the state through increased earning capacity, tax
14 revenue, and economic vitality; and

15 WHEREAS, Rhode Island is home to programs such as the Welcome Back Center at
16 Dorcas Place, which has been successful in helping foreign-trained professionals in the healthcare
17 field overcome barriers to employment such as learning English, navigating Rhode Island's
18 licensure and test-taking requirements, and becoming familiar with the U.S. health care system;
19 now therefore be it

1 RESOLVED, That the "Special Senate Task Force to Study the Evaluation and
2 Certification of Foreign-Trained Professionals," be and the same is hereby created consisting of
3 seven (7) members: one of whom shall be a member of the Senate, to be appointed by the
4 President of the Senate, who shall serve as chair; one of whom shall be the Director of the
5 Department of Business Regulation, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the
6 Department of Labor and Training, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the
7 Department of Health, or designee; one of whom shall be the Commissioner of Higher Education,
8 or designee; one of whom shall be shall be the President of the Hospital Association of Rhode
9 Island, or designee; and one of whom shall be the Director of the Welcome Back Center at
10 Dorcas Place, or designee.

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

16 The purpose of said task force shall be to undertake a comprehensive study regarding the
17 feasibility, challenges, and opportunities of establishing of a statewide system for evaluating and
18 certifying prior training, skills, and education of foreign-trained professionals.

19 Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the task force shall meet at the
20 call of the Senate President.

21 Vacancies in said task force shall be filled in like manner as the original appointment.

22 The membership of said task force shall receive no compensation for their services.

23 All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish such advice and information,
24 documentary and otherwise, to said task force and its agents as is deemed necessary or desirable
25 by the task force to facilitate the purposes of this resolution.

26 The Joint Committee on Legislative Services is hereby authorized and directed to provide
27 suitable quarters for said task force; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the task force shall report its findings and recommendations to the
29 Senate on or before March 4, 2015, and said commission shall expire on July 1, 2015.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
SENATE RESOLUTION
CREATING THE "SPECIAL SENATE TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE EVALUATION AND
CERTIFICATION OF FOREIGN-TRAINED PROFESSIONALS"

1 This resolution would create a seven (7) member special senate task force whose purpose
2 it would be to study the evaluation and certification of foreign-trained professionals, and who
3 would report back to the Senate no later than March 4, 2015, and whose life would expire on July
4 1, 2015.

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