

LC03468

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2006**

**JOINT RESOLUTION**

**THE RHODE ISLAND HEALTH CARE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2006 - PART V**

Introduced By: Representatives Gemma, McNamara, Corvese, Kennedy, and Story

Date Introduced: June 15, 2006

Referred To: House Corporations

1           WHEREAS, On April 12, 2006, landmark legislation was enacted in the Commonwealth  
2 of Massachusetts that would provide nearly universal health care coverage to Massachusetts'  
3 residents; and

4           WHEREAS, The states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island share the advantages of a  
5 high percentage of employers offering employee health benefits and expanded Medicaid  
6 programs; and

7           WHEREAS, The states of Massachusetts and Rhode Island each have lower percentages  
8 of uninsured persons than the national average; and

9           WHEREAS, Health care costs continue to rise at rates significantly outpacing wage  
10 increases; and

11           WHEREAS, These cost increases have led to reduced employer profits, increased  
12 employee expenses, and more persons who are without health insurance coverage; and

13           WHEREAS, The Massachusetts Health Care Reform Plan combines features of  
14 individual responsibility with government subsidies, and crossing traditional ideological  
15 boundaries; now, therefore be it

16           RESOLVED, That this General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island and Providence  
17 Plantations hereby strongly believes that a thorough study of the applicability of the  
18 Massachusetts Health Care Reform Plan to Rhode Island is necessary; and be it further

19           RESOLVED, That a special Task Force on Health Care Reform be and the same is  
20 hereby created consisting of nineteen (19) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the

1 House of Representatives, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by  
2 the Speaker of the House; three (3) of whom shall be members of the Senate, not more than two  
3 (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; one of whom  
4 shall be the Lieutenant Governor of the State of Rhode Island, who shall be chair; one of whom  
5 shall be the Director of the Department of Health, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director  
6 of the Department of Human Services, or designee; one of whom shall be the Rhode Island  
7 Health Insurance Commissioner, or designee; three (3) of whom shall be members of the public,  
8 one of whom shall be a Rhode Island Business owner and one (1) of whom shall be a  
9 representative of organized labor and one (1) of whom shall be a consumer, to be appointed by  
10 the Governor; three (3) of whom shall be members of the public, one (1) of whom shall be a  
11 Rhode Island Business owner and one (1) of whom shall be a representative of organized labor  
12 and one (1) of whom shall be a consumer, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; three  
13 (3) of whom shall be members of the public, one of whom shall be a Rhode Island Business  
14 owner one (1) of whom shall be a representative of organized labor and one of whom shall be a  
15 consumer, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House.

16 In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a task force, permanent  
17 advisory commission, a legislative study commission, or any commission created by a General  
18 Assembly resolution, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to  
19 serve in lieu of a legislator, provided that the majority leader or the minority leader of the political  
20 party which is entitled to the appointment consents to the appointment of the member of the  
21 general public.

22 The purpose of said task force shall be to make a comprehensive study of the  
23 Massachusetts Health Care Reform Plan and its potential applicability to the State of Rhode  
24 Island.

25 On November 15, 2006, or immediately thereafter, the members of the task force shall  
26 meet at the call of the General Assembly and organize and shall select, from among the  
27 legislators, a chairperson. Vacancies in said task force shall be filled in like manner as the  
28 original appointment.

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

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

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

- 1 RESOLVED, That the task force shall report its findings and recommendations to the
- 2 General Assembly no later than June 5, 2007 and said task force shall expire on August 5, 2007.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
JOINT RESOLUTION  
THE RHODE ISLAND HEALTH CARE AFFORDABILITY ACT OF 2006 - PART V

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- 1           This resolution would create a nineteen (19) member special task force whose purpose it
- 2 would be to make a comprehensive study of the Massachusetts Health Care Reform Plan and its
- 3 potential applicability to the State of Rhode Island, and who would report back to the General
- 4 Assembly no later than June 5, 2007 and whose life would expire on August 5, 2007.

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