

2019 -- S 1038

LC002941

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

SENATE RESOLUTION

CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF  
INSURER PAYMENTS ON ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Introduced By: Senator Joshua Miller

Date Introduced: June 28, 2019

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, Rhode Islanders are often unable to access necessary medical, dental, and  
2 mental health care in a timely fashion; and

3 WHEREAS, A lack of sufficient access may contribute to over-utilization of emergency  
4 departments or to forcing Rhode Islanders to forgo health care; and

5 WHEREAS, An inability to access the appropriate care, from the appropriate provider in  
6 an appropriate setting, is negatively impacting the overall health status of Rhode Islanders; and

7 WHEREAS, Many dental and mental health professionals have historically not  
8 participated in contracts for services with the state's health insurers, which amplifies the difficulty  
9 for Rhode Islanders to locate and receive appropriate mental health services; and

10 WHEREAS, The sufficiency of payments to providers for medical, dental, and mental  
11 health care may be negatively impacting the ability of Rhode Islanders to access appropriate care  
12 in appropriate settings; and

13 WHEREAS, These payment issues are not limited to commercial health insurers, but also  
14 impact Rhode Island's Medicaid managed care as well; now, therefore be it

15 WHEREAS, The Senate Finance and Senate Health and Human Services Committees  
16 understand this to be a matter of utmost importance to Rhode Island public health policy; now,  
17 therefore be it"

18 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby requests a study of the issue of health insurance  
19 payments for medical, dental, and mental health services to determine if the current payments

1 impact the state's health insurer network adequacy and appropriate access to health care for  
2 Rhode Islanders; and be it further

3         RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission to study the impact of insurer  
4 payments on access to health care be and the same is hereby created to assist the work of the two  
5 Senate Committees, and this commission shall consist of fifteen (15) members: three (3) of whom  
6 shall be members of the Rhode Island Senate, not more than two (2) from the same political  
7 party, to be appointed by the President of the Senate; and twelve (12) of whom shall be members  
8 to be appointed by the President of the Senate, who may include, but need not be limited to, the  
9 state's Health Insurance Commissioner, or designee; the Secretary of the Executive Office of  
10 Health and Human Services, or designee; the President of the Rhode Island Medical Society, or  
11 designee; the President of the Dental Association of Rhode Island, or designee; a community-  
12 based psychiatrist; the President of the Rhode Island Community Health Center Association, or  
13 designee; the President of the Substance Use and Mental Health Leadership Association, or  
14 designee; at least two (2) representatives from commercial health insurers, including one insurer  
15 that is a Rhode Island Medicaid Managed Care Organization; at least one representative from a  
16 Rhode Island-based institution of higher education with appropriate expertise in public health;  
17 and a representative from the Hospital Association of Rhode Island.

18         In lieu of any appointment of a member of the legislature to a permanent advisory  
19 commission, a legislative study commission, or any commission created by a General Assembly  
20 resolution, the appointing authority may appoint a member of the general public to serve in place  
21 of a legislator, provided that the Senate President or the Minority Leader of the political party that  
22 is entitled to the appointment consents to the appointment of the member of the general public.

23         The purpose of said commission shall be to conduct a comprehensive review of health  
24 insurance payments for medical, dental, and mental health services to determine if the current  
25 payments impact the state's health insurer network adequacy and appropriate access to health  
26 care for Rhode Islanders.

27         Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at  
28 the call of the Chair of the commission, who shall be appointed by the President of the Senate.

29         Vacancies in said commission shall be filled in like manner as the original appointment.

30         A quorum of the commission shall consist of a majority of its membership, and the  
31 membership of said commission shall receive no compensation for their services.

32         The commission shall assemble no less than four (4) times, or more often at the call of  
33 the Chair, upon written notice of each meeting stating the place, day, and time of the meeting,  
34 along with the purpose and/or agenda of the meeting.

1 All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish such advice and information,  
2 documentary and otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or  
3 desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of this resolution.

4 The Joint Committee on Legislative Services is hereby authorized and directed to provide  
5 suitable quarters for said commission; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings, recommendations, and  
7 potential legislative proposals to the President of the Senate, the Chair of the Senate Finance  
8 Committee, and the Chair of the Senate Health and Human Service Committee, on or before  
9 January 31, 2020, and said commission shall expire on May 31, 2020.

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