

2023 -- H 6449

LC002990

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO REVIEW AND PROVIDE  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICIES THAT DEAL WITH NUMEROUS ECONOMIC  
AND SOCIAL SHORT-TERM RENTALS ISSUES CONCURRENTLY

Introduced By: Representative Lauren H. Carson

Date Introduced: May 26, 2023

Referred To: House Municipal Government & Housing

1 WHEREAS, Short-term rental accommodations account for more than 25 percent of the  
2 United States lodging market with the rise of companies like Airbnb creating a booming market  
3 that provides affordable short-term rentals for travelers; and

4 WHEREAS, A short-term rental (STR) is usually defined as a rental of a residential  
5 dwelling unit or accessory building for periods of less than 30 consecutive days and may be  
6 referred to as vacation rentals, transient rentals, short-term vacation rentals, or resort dwelling  
7 units; and

8 WHEREAS, While beneficial to the individual homeowner, oftentimes, the use of short-  
9 term rentals produces significant consequences for the surrounding community, creating the need  
10 to balance the rights of individual property owners with those of the community; and

11 WHEREAS, While current studies have examined the economic and social benefits of  
12 short-term rentals with recommendations to lower the potential drawbacks, it is necessary to  
13 review the creation of policies that deal with numerous issues concurrently rather than addressing  
14 each potential issue individually; now, therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created  
16 consisting of fifteen (15) members: four (4) of whom shall be members of the Rhode Island  
17 House of Representatives, not more than three (3) from the same political party, to be appointed  
18 by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island Hospitality  
19 Association, or designee; one of whom shall be the Director of the Rhode Island League of Cities

1 and Towns, or designee; one of whom shall be the Tax Administrator at Rhode Island Division of  
2 Taxation, or designee; one of whom shall be a member of a regional Tourism District  
3 Organization, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the Mayor of  
4 the City of Newport, or designee; one of whom shall be the Mayor of the City of Warwick, or  
5 designee; one of whom shall be the owner of a small, owner-occupied, short-term rental (STR), to  
6 be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the owner of a large (over 8  
7 units), short-term rental (STR) property, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; one of  
8 whom shall be a representative of a RI Planning/Zoning Association, to be appointed by the  
9 Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the President of the RI Association of REALTORS,  
10 or designee; and one of whom shall be the Executive Director of The Rhode Island Short Term  
11 Rental Association, or designee.

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

17 The purpose of said commission shall be to study the effects of short-term rentals on the  
18 State of Rhode Island and on Rhode Island municipalities. The study shall include, but not be  
19 limited to:

- 20 • Review of all current and existing RI Statutes on short-term rentals;
- 21 • An update on DBR registrations process and enforcement;
- 22 • Municipal vs. state regulation: pre-emption;
- 23 • Taxation: whole house, impact fee;
- 24 • Taxation: accuracy of hotel and sales tax collection/review of the process;
- 25 • Impact on year-round and local housing market and neighborhoods;
- 26 • Health and safety concerns and issues; and
- 27 • Best practice in other states/communities.

28 In addition, the commission shall:

- 29 • Establish a working definition of "short term rentals";
- 30 • Engage the public and community stakeholders including property owners,  
31 industry representatives, Police and Fire Chiefs, and zoning and planning officials, etc., for input;
- 32 • Develop an understanding of the nature, extent, and scope of short-term rental  
33 activity and identify specific benefits, problems, or issues associated with "short-term rentals" and  
34 how it varies from neighborhood to neighborhood, and municipality to municipality.

1           Forthwith upon passage of this resolution, the members of the commission shall meet at  
2 the call of the Speaker of the House and organize and shall select, from among the legislators, a  
3 chairperson.

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

5           The membership of said commission shall receive no compensation for their services.

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

9           The Speaker of the House is hereby authorized and directed to provide suitable quarters  
10 for said commission; and be it further

11           RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its initial findings and recommendations  
12 to the House of Representatives on or before March 15, 2024, with submission of subsequent  
13 findings reported biannually, and said commission shall expire on April 15, 2026.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
HOUSE RESOLUTION  
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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICIES THAT DEAL WITH NUMEROUS ECONOMIC  
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1           This resolution would create a fifteen (15) member legislative commission to review and  
2 provide recommendations for concurrent policies dealing with numerous economic and social  
3 short-term rentals issues, and said commission would report back by March 15, 2024, with  
4 submission of subsequent findings reported biannually, and said commission would expire on  
5 April 15, 2026.

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