

**2019 -- H 5553 SUBSTITUTE A**

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LC001929/SUB A/2  
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**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019**

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A N A C T

CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY AND PROVIDE  
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENCOURAGING MORE PERSONS OF COLOR TO ENTER  
THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

Introduced By: Representatives Alzate, McNamara, Casimiro, Kazarian, and  
Maldonado

Date Introduced: February 27, 2019

Referred To: House Health, Education & Welfare

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           WHEREAS, A report by the Learning Policy Institute showed that a diverse teacher  
2 workforce is a very important strategy for improving learning and closing achievement gaps for  
3 students of color; and

4           WHEREAS, Increasing the number of teachers of color in Rhode Island's schools is not  
5 only important and beneficial for students of color; a diverse teacher workforce that represents the  
6 state's overall demographics will also benefit students of all racial backgrounds; now, therefore be  
7 it

8           RESOLVED, That a special legislative commission be and the same is hereby created  
9 consisting of thirteen (13) members: three (3) of whom shall be members of the House of  
10 Representatives, not more than two (2) from the same political party, to be appointed by the  
11 Speaker of the House; one of whom shall be the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary  
12 Education, or designee; one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode Island Chapter of the  
13 American Federation of Teachers, or designee; one of whom shall be the President of the Rhode  
14 Island Chapter of the National Education Association, or designee; three (3) of whom shall be  
15 members of student focused organizations, such as, but not limited to, Providence Student Union,  
16 Young Voices, Alliance of Rhode Island Southeast Asians for Education, and Youth in Action, to  
17 be appointed by the Speaker of the House; three (3) of whom shall be members of community  
18 based organizations with vested interest in the issue of teachers of color, such as, but not limited

1 to, EduLeaders of Color, Rhode Island Coalition for Educators of Color, Breakthrough  
2 Providence, and Teach for America, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House; and one of  
3 whom shall be a member of the Educational Studies faculty at Rhode Island College, to be  
4 appointed by the Speaker of the House.

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

10 The purpose of said commission shall be to study and make recommendations for  
11 encouraging students and persons of color to enter and continue to be involved in the field of  
12 education. The work and recommendations should include, but not be limited to:

13 • Develop an approach to inform students of color in the state on the importance and  
14 benefits of entering the field of education;

15 • Identify relevant research and successful practices to enhance minority teacher  
16 recruitment and retention throughout the state;

17 • Identify and establish public, private, and philanthropic partnerships to increase  
18 minority (meaning individuals whose race is other than white, or whose ethnicity is Hispanic or  
19 Latino as that term is used by the U.S. Census Bureau) teacher recruitment, including, but not  
20 limited to teacher preparation programs;

21 • Advise and support local and regional boards of education to prioritize minority  
22 teacher recruitment and develop innovative strategies to attract and retain minority teachers  
23 within their districts;

24 • Review the requirements that prevent persons of color from choosing this profession  
25 and remaining in it, including, but not limited to, teacher preparation programs, certification  
26 requirements, and lack of diversity in union leadership; and

27 • Identify a process or method to prepare, support, and encourage school leadership to  
28 increase retention of teachers of color.

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

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

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

34 All departments and agencies of the state shall furnish such advice and information,

1 documentary and otherwise, to said commission and its agents as is deemed necessary or  
2 desirable by the commission to facilitate the purposes of this resolution.

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

5           RESOLVED, That the commission shall report its findings and recommendations to the  
6 House of Representatives no later than April 17, 2020, and said commission shall expire on June  
7 17, 2020.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

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CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY AND PROVIDE  
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THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

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1           This resolution would create a thirteen (13) member special legislative commission  
2 whose purpose it would be to study and make recommendations for encouraging more persons of  
3 color to enter the field of education, and who would report back to the House of Representatives  
4 on or before April 17, 2020, and whose life would expire on June 17, 2020.

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