



**Governor's Commission on Disabilities**  
**Executive Committee**  
**Tuesday September 23, 2014 4 PM - 5:00 PM**  
 John O. Pastore Center, 41 Cherry Dale Court,  
 Cranston, RI 02920-3049  
 (voice) 401-462-0107 (fax) 462-0106 (tty) via RI Relay 711  
 (e-mail) [GDC.Disabilities@gcd.ri.gov](mailto:GDC.Disabilities@gcd.ri.gov) (website) [www.disabilities.ri.gov](http://www.disabilities.ri.gov)



**Attendees:** Timothy Flynn (Chair.); Andrew Argenbright; Ronald McMinn; & Jack Ringland  
**Absentees:** Rosemary Carmody, (Vice Chair.); Judi Drew; Sarah Everhart Skeels; Casey Gartland; Harvey Salvas; & Linda Ward

**Guests:**  
**Staff:** Bob Cooper, Executive Secretary, Christopher DeGrave



**4:00 Call to Order and Acceptance of the Minutes, Timothy Flynn, Chair**

Chair calls the meeting to order at 4:11 PM  
 Introductions of Commissioners and guests



**Potential MOTION:** To accept the minutes of the previous meeting as *presented/revised as follows*  
 Motion moved by \_\_, seconded by \_\_, *passed/unanimous/ opposed by\_/\_ abstained \_ / defeated/ supported by\_\_*

**Action Items:**



**4:05 Interviews and Selection of Fall 2014 Fellows, Timothy Flynn**

**Purpose/Goal:** To select college fellows for the next semester

**Discussion:** The one applicant has expressed an interest in the Architectural Accessibility Fellowship. When asked she indicated she would also consider the Public Policy Fellowship.

***PROGRAM DESCRIPTION***

The Governor's Commission on Disabilities' (GCD) Fellowships provide semester long part-time placements with the Commission in Cranston, RI, working on disability policy and research. The Fellow will assist one of the committees and, through individualized learning experiences, become familiar with procedures used to design and implement disability policy. Mentor experiences will introduce the Fellow to disability policy issues and actions at the local, state, and federal levels. The Governor's Commission on Disabilities is an independent state agency responsible for reviewing all state laws, programs, and policies concerning children and adults with disabilities and making policy recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly.

***THE FELLOWSHIP OFFERS***

As a GCD Fellow, you will be assigned to a specific placement, providing

assistance to the Commission in disability policy. The fellowship offers you a unique opportunity to:

- ◆ Gain perspective on the role and responsibility of the Commission;
- ◆ Expand your knowledge of national/state disability programs, policy issues and research;
- ◆ Meet with decision makers, experts and critics in disability and related policy fields and;
- ◆ Develop networks with local, regional, and national based experts, and researchers who can assist in career development and future endeavors.

The Commission will provide a living expense stipend of \$3,450 during the semester and reimbursement for authorized travel.

***WHAT YOU OFFER THE FELLOWSHIP***

As a GCD Fellow, you will provide assistance to the Commission as it relates to disability policy and / or the formulation of legislation. At least one GCD Fellowship is available each semester. Students wanting to see the "policy" side as opposed to the "clinical" side of the human service system would find the fellowships a worthwhile experience. A complete description of each of the fellowships is below.

***ELIGIBILITY***

This program is designed for individuals with demonstrated leadership and expertise in policy and research affecting people with disabilities. Candidates must:

- ◆ Have completed at least 3 semesters of college-level study;
- ◆ Be enrolled as a full or part-time student in an accredited college or university in Rhode Island;
- ◆ Have leadership ability;
- ◆ Have the endorsement of a current/former supervisor;
- ◆ Have approval on the part of the college/university to receive credit for the fellowship if selected;
- ◆ Have the ability to participate in the semester-long program in Rhode Island for at least two hundred and forty (240) hours during the semester; and
- ◆ Demonstrate the ability to perform the duties of the fellowship (see list of duties on the attached pages).

**G. FRANK HANAWAY ARCHITECTURAL ACCESSIBILITY FELLOWSHIP<sup>1</sup>**

***Spring (and Non-Election Year Summer and Fall) Semesters***

The Fellow's duties include:

- 1) Assisting the Commission's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II State and Local Government Services, Title III Public Accommodations and Commercial Facilities, and Public Transportation technical assistance activities including:
  - a) Training
  - b) Technical assistance
  - c) Information dissemination

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<sup>1</sup> This fellowship is funded through a grant from the New England ADA Center at the Institute for Human Centered Design NIDRR Grant # H133A110028.

	<p>d) Outreach</p> <p>i) Target population: The profile of disability has changed over the years in terms of types of conditions for children and adults, cultural and socio-economic patterns of disability, and the implications of an aging society. In addition to our existing target populations, we intend to broaden our reach to populations that include emergency management personnel in the public and private sectors, youth especially those within the spectrum of prevalent learning, developmental, mental health and chronic health conditions, veterans and older workers, increasingly likely to remain in the workforce into their '70s, people with disabilities from multi-cultural communities and low income communities</p> <p>e) Capacity building</p> <p>i) The Commission is expand the “State ADA Coalition” to include new target population: emergency management personnel, youth (college students under age 3D), older workers, veterans and people with disabilities for m multi-cultural communities.</p> <p>2) A special emphasis of this fellowship is out reach to the following populations:</p> <p>a) <u>Disabled Veterans</u>. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have resulted in proportions of well over 20% collecting disability benefits. For many, the injuries are at a level of severity that would not have been survivable in previous conflicts. Of the 1M troops who've left active duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, 46% have pursued VA services and 48% of them have pursued mental health care (USDVA). Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is routinely referenced as the signature disability of these wars.</p> <p>b) <u>Youth with Disabilities</u>. The priority to reach youth in transition and college students with disabilities demands additional TA products that align with their appetites as well as needs. Young people with disabilities, specifically those who are higher education students, are often hard to reach.</p> <p>c) <u>Older Workers</u>. The demographic tsunami of aging is hitting the US now as the 78M Baby Boom generation shift to being mostly over 55 with profound implications for workplaces for the foreseeable future. Given the incidence of disability in older cohorts, making this new reality work is a pervasive challenge. Recognizing that the generation that has reinvented everything over the course of their lives warrants special attention in designing an approach to them and in the design of Technical Assistance materials.</p> <p>d) <u>Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security</u> - A strong investment in building capacity in this area in the region will require orchestrating a set of interlocking activities and resources, some available through the various national initiatives on this topic in the last decade and some to supplement those.</p> <p>3) Observing the rules of confidentiality regarding the privacy of the parties and cases before the Commission.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EDMUND BECK ACCESSIBLE ELECTION FELLOWSHIP<sup>2</sup></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Election Year Summer and Fall Semesters</i></b></p> <p>The Fellow’s duties include:</p> <p>1. Assisting the Commission’s voting rights enforcement and technical</p>

<sup>2</sup> This fellowship is funded through the Help America Vote Act - Election Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Grant.

	<p>assistance activities including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) <b>Conducting on site accessibility surveys to ensure that polling places are accessible</b>, including the path of travel, entrances, exits, and voting areas of each polling facility, accessible to individuals with the full range of disabilities (e.g., visual impairments, including blindness; hearing impairments, including deafness; the full range of mobility impairments, including gross and fine motor impairments, emotional impairments, and intellectual impairments). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Identifying solutions that can be quickly installed, even on a temporary basis to eliminate all barriers to voting.</li> <li>ii) Conducting spot checks on Election Day to ensure compliance with the Voting Rights Acts.</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) <b>Assisting state and local election officials and poll workers to provide the same opportunity for access and participation</b> (including privacy and independence) to individuals with the full range of disabilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Recruiting people with disabilities to be poll workers</li> <li>ii) Conducting voter registration drives</li> <li>iii) Setting up transportation to polling places for voters who are dependent on accessible transportation (wheelchair lift equipped vehicles) on Election Day.</li> </ul> </li> <li>c) <b>Developing disability voting rights training material for election officials, poll workers, and election volunteers</b> on how best to promote the access and participation of individuals with the full range of disabilities in elections for Federal office</li> <li>d) <b>Creating outreach and awareness tools that provide individuals with the full range of disabilities with information about the accessibility of polling places.</b></li> </ul> <p>2. Observing the rules of confidentiality regarding the privacy of the parties and cases before the Commission.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MARY BRENNAN PUBLIC POLICY FELLOWSHIP</b></p> <p><i>Summer and Fall Semesters</i></p> <p>The focus of the fellowship is a series of Public Forums on the Concerns of People with Disabilities and their Families are held annually during the week the anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities (July 26th). The purpose of the forums is to ensure the State Government and the sponsoring organizations hear from people with disabilities and their families, their concerns and ideas from improving the lives of all Rhode Islanders with disabilities.</p> <p>1) The Fall Fellow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Reviews the transcripts from each of the forums;</li> <li>b) Identifies common concerns and issues;</li> <li>c) Tags the transcript with hyperlinks for easy retrieval of testimony by those themes;</li> </ul>

	<p>d) Assists in setting up working groups to review the testimony, and develop recommendations to address the concerns raised at the forums; and</p> <p>e) Compiles the findings and recommendations and edits the final report for submission to the Commission for its adoption and creating of the Commission’s legislative agenda for the next General Assembly session.</p> <p>2) The fellows must observe the rules of confidentiality regarding the privacy of the parties and cases before the Commission.</p>
	<p>Standard Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Please tell us about yourself i.e. where you’re going to school, what your studying, why, etc.</li> <li>2. What interests you about the work that the Commission does?</li> <li>3. Tell us about your experience working/interacting with people with disabilities.</li> <li>4. Why are you interested in becoming a fellow with the Governor’s Commission?</li> <li>5. What knowledge or skills do you currently have that can be applied to the Commission’s work?</li> <li>6. Tell us about your computer skills: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Describe your experience with Microsoft products including Access.</li> <li>b. Describe your experience building or maintaining web sites? (only necessary for the communication fellowship)</li> </ol> </li> <li>7. We’re interested in your availability and time constraints, given this: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. When would you be able to work during regular business hours 9 - 4 weekdays?</li> <li>b. Occasionally, work needs to be done, primarily for presentations, would you be available before or after regular business hours?</li> <li>c. Do you participate in other activities or have another job, in addition to attending classes?</li> </ol> </li> <li>8. Please share with us your approach to managing your time and meet deadlines.</li> <li>9. How do you expect to use what you acquire during this fellowship, in the future?</li> <li>10. Do you have any questions for us or is there anything else you feel we should know about you?</li> </ol>
	<p><b>MOTION:</b> To not fill any of the fellowship  Motion moved by RMcM, seconded by JR, passed unanimously</p>
	<p><b>MOTION:</b> To recommend the change the name of the G. Frank Hanaway Architectural Accessibility Fellowship by dropping from the name the word “Architectural”. RMcM/JR passed unanimously.</p>
	<p><b>4:40 Appointment/Re-Appointment of Commissioners, Timothy Flynn</b></p> <p><b>Purpose/Goal:</b> To make recommendations to the Governor on appointments and reappointments of Commissioners.</p> <p>Discussion: We have a second vacancy to consider.</p>
	<p><b>Motion:</b> To recommend the following Commissioners be appointed to the Commission: Jack Ringland  Motion moved by TF, seconded by RMcM, <i>passed, Abstained JR.</i></p>

	<p><b><i>4:50 Policy Advice to Candidates for General Offices &amp; US Congress</i></b></p>
	<p><b>Purpose/Goal: To make recommendations to the candidates for general offices and US Congress regarding Rhode Islanders with disabilities and their families</b></p>
	<p>Discussion: See attached draft PowerPoint</p>
	<p><u>129,386 Rhode Islanders with Disabilities: Ideas for Today and Tomorrow</u></p>
	<p>The following material would be included on a CD with the draft PowerPoint, the Commission's Reports:</p>
	<p><u>Promoting Independence and Employment First</u>, RI Governor's Commission on Disabilities, Unanimously Adopted on December 13, 2010</p>
	<p><u>A Proposal for Implementing A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities</u>, Prepared for Governor Lincoln D. Chafee By the Governor's Commission on Disabilities, December 13, 2013.</p>
	<p><u>Rhode Island's Disability Services Budget Fiscal Years 2014 - 2015</u>, prepared by the Governor's Commission on Disabilities, June 16, 2014, as passed by the RI House of Representatives</p>
	<p><u>Creating an Accessible Political Campaign: Practical Tips to Include People with Disabilities and Win More Votes!</u></p>



*129,386 Rhode Islanders with Disabilities*

*Ideas for Today and Tomorrow*



# A Vision for Rhode Island

That all 129,386 Rhode Islander\* with a disability are able to accomplish their maximum potential in independence, human development, productivity and economic self-sufficiency.

\* For table see notes



# The Mission

Adoption of state government policies that will ensure every person with a disability:

- Is able to work\* with supports/accommodations as needed;
- Is able to live on her / his own; with the right services, at the right time, and in the right place;
- Is involved in her / his neighborhood and community;
- Has inclusive educational opportunities, including post-secondary education and job training;
- Has consumer directed healthcare services; and
- Is able to exercise all the rights and have the same responsibilities of citizens of this state.

\* Including entrepreneurship opportunities



# Adoption of an Independence and Employment First: Disability Policy

1. Government funded services for individuals with disabilities would all be designed and implemented with the goal of increased economic self-sufficiency and employment and decreased dependence on service delivery systems; and
2. Reduce state administrative expenses through unified planning at the individual and family level by:
  - Eliminating multiple eligibility assessments;
  - Identifying the highest federal matching source for each service the individual needs; and
  - Utilizing a holistic management of all services leading to employment and independence.
3. **A State Government Wide Philosophy that all citizens with disabilities will be:**
  - Encouraged and assisted to reach their maximum potential of independence and self-sufficiency;
  - Provided the necessary independent living supports, including accessible transportation throughout the state; and
  - Evaluated and served according to their ability and needs, not siloed and warehoused according to their disability.

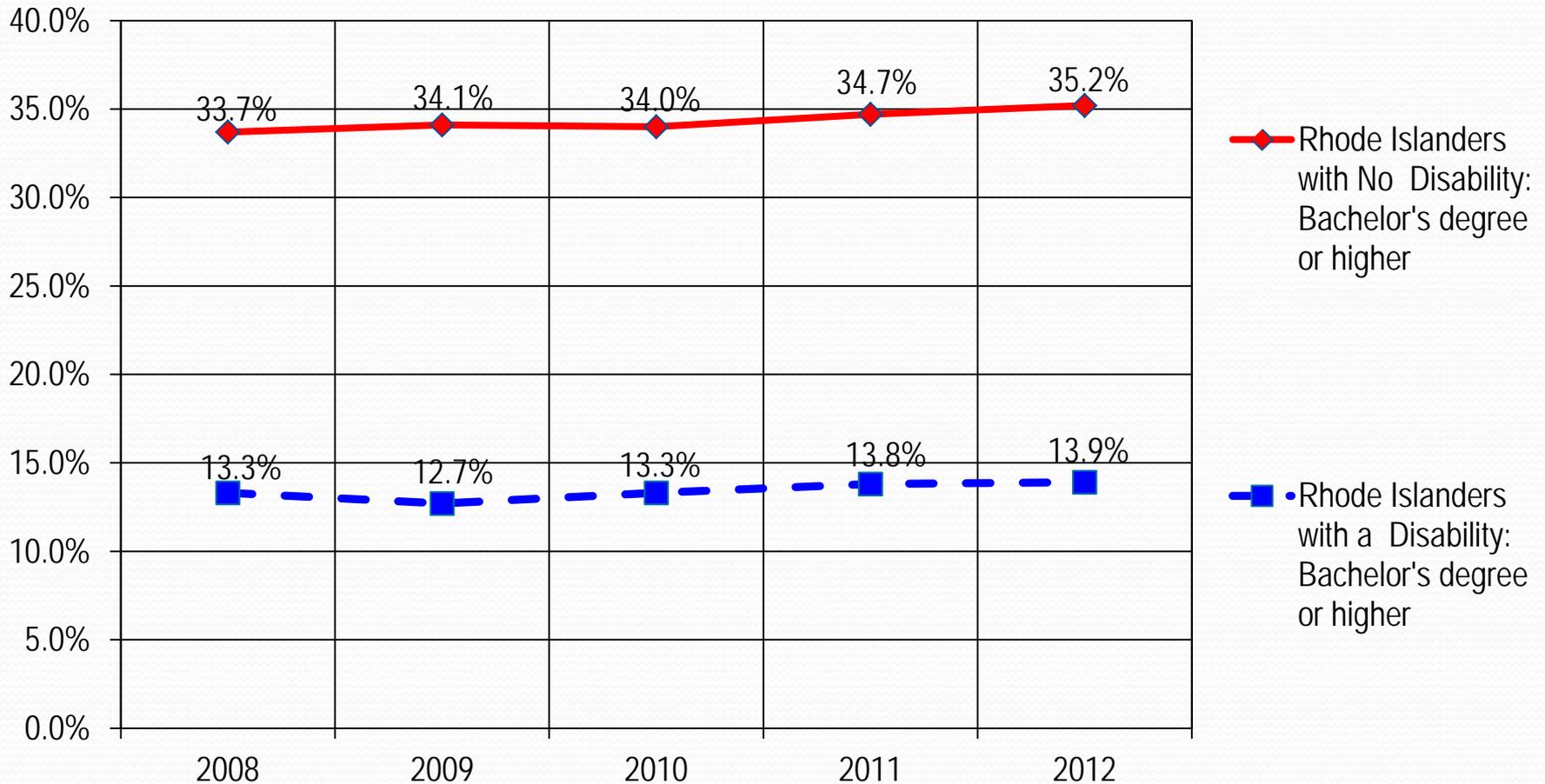


# Strategic Barriers

- Only 14% of Rhode Islanders with a Disability are college graduates vs. 35% of Rhode Islanders with No Disability
- Only 20% of Rhode Islanders with a Disability are Employed vs. 68% of Rhode Islanders with No Disability
- Rhode Islanders with Disabilities are Self-Employed at about one-half the rate of Americans with Disabilities
- The Median Earned Income of Employed RI Workers with a Disability is more than \$10,000 less than Employed RI Workers with No Disability
- While only 62.5% of Rhode Islanders with a Disability have an income at or above 150% of the poverty level (FPL), 82.5% Rhode Islanders with No Disability have an income at or above 150% FPL
- 74% of Rhode Islanders with a Disability have public health insurance, 72% of Rhode Islanders with No Disability have private insurance



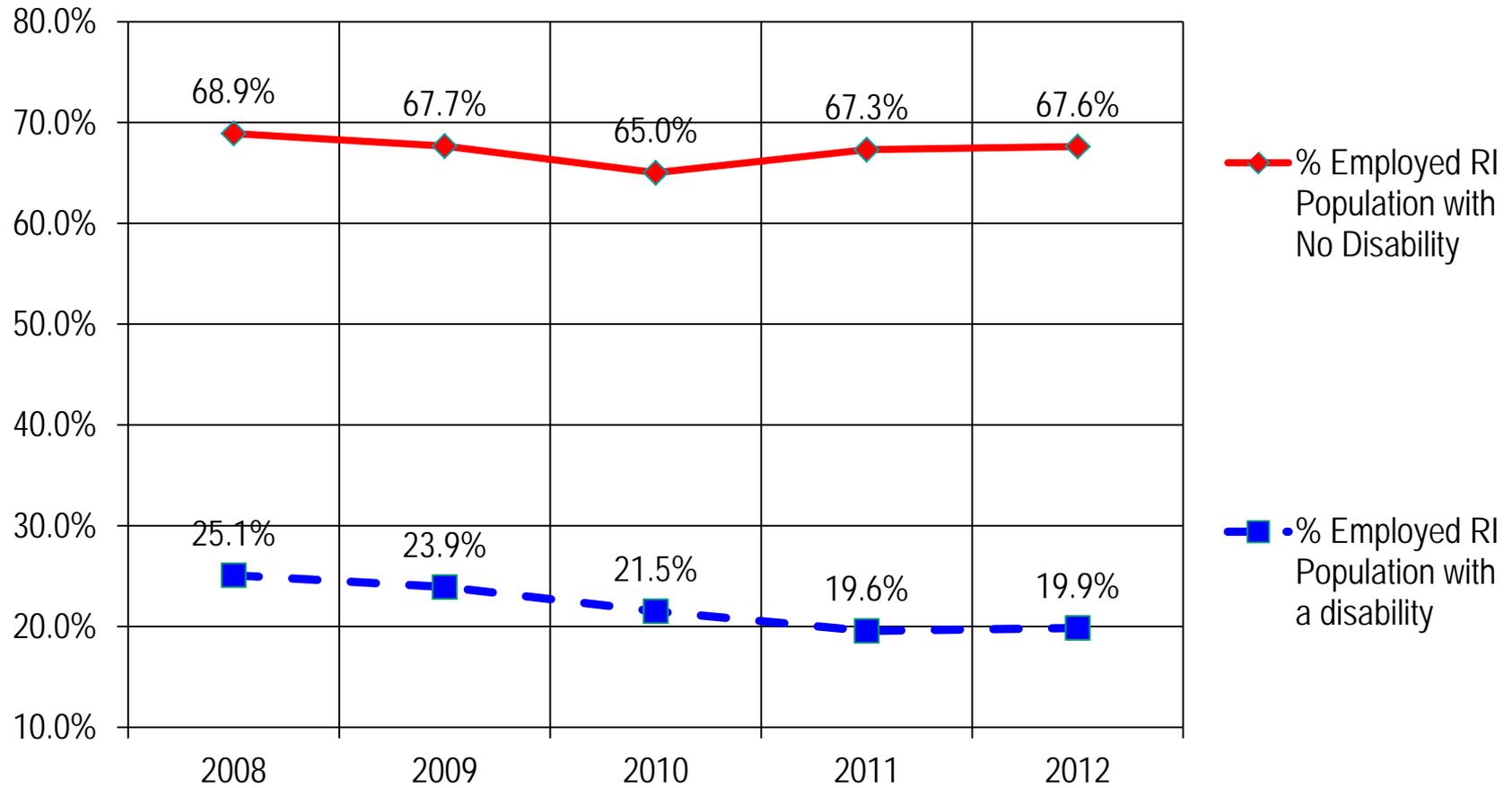
# Only 14% of Rhode Islanders with a Disability are College Graduates vs. 35% of Rhode Islanders with No Disability



For table see notes



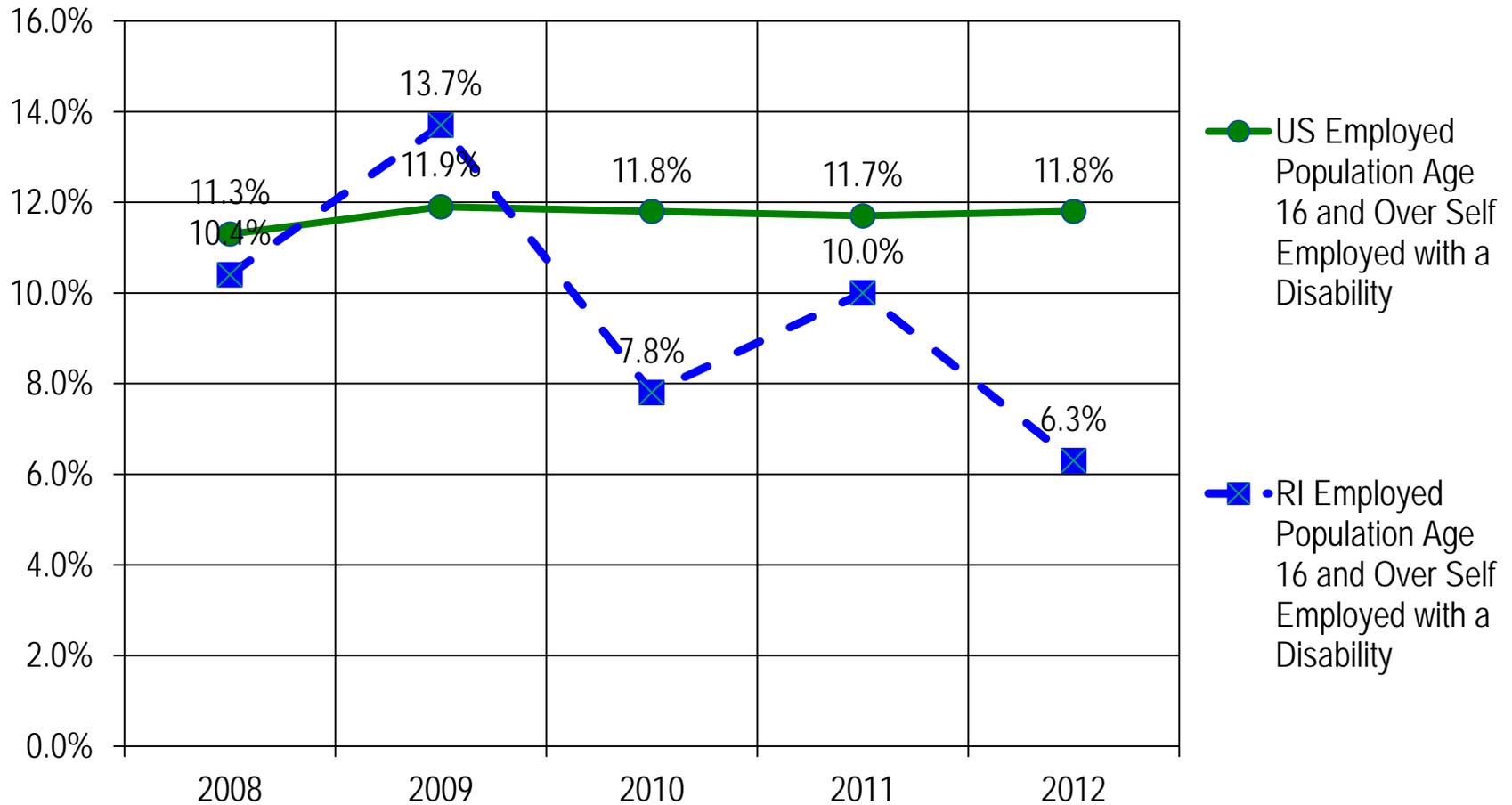
# Only 20% of Rhode Islanders with a Disability are Employed vs. 68% of Rhode Islanders with No Disability



For table see notes



# Rhode Islanders with Disabilities are Self-Employed at about One-Half the Rate of Americans with Disabilities



For table see notes



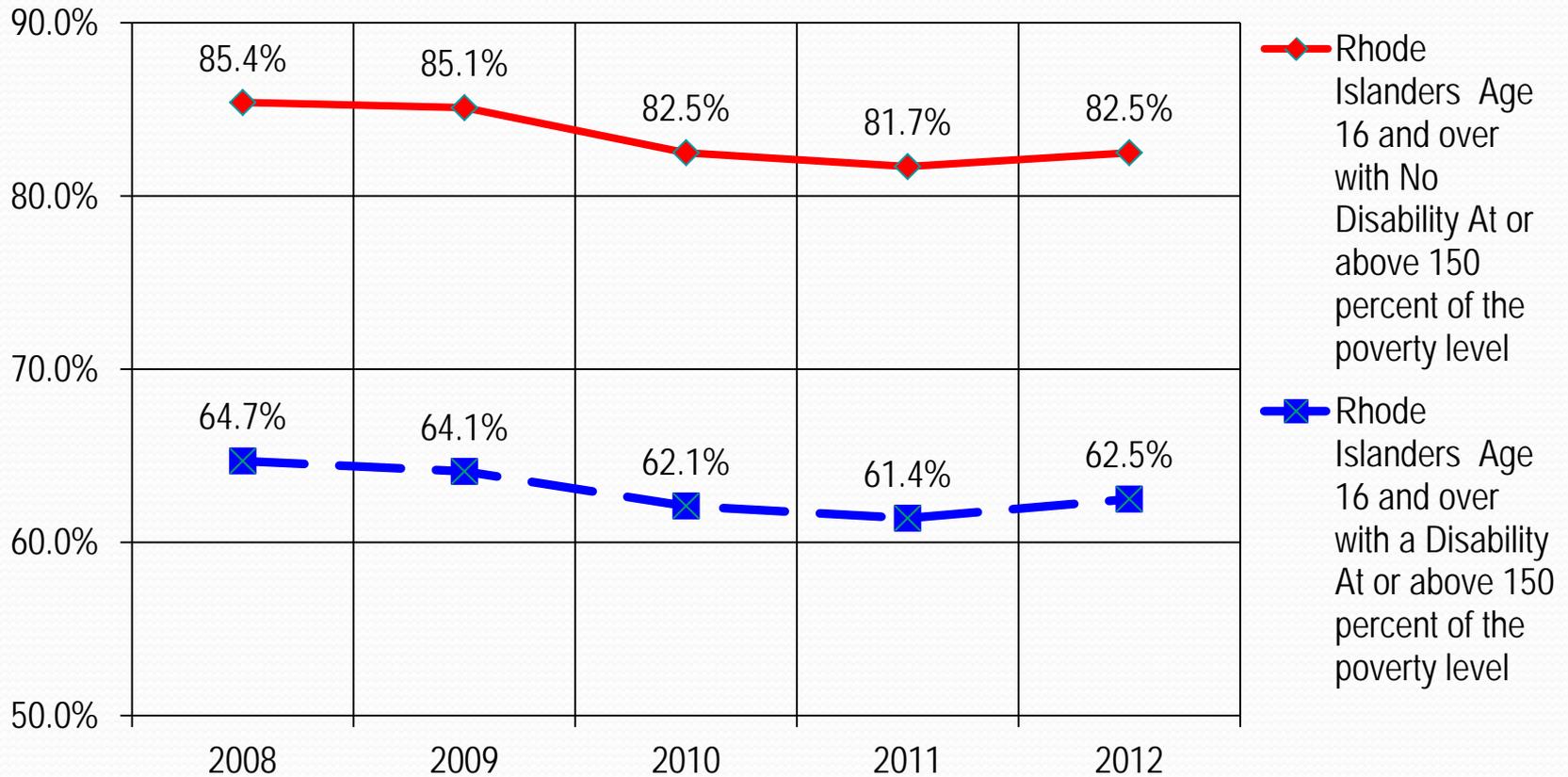
# The Median Earned Income of Employed RI Workers with a Disability is more than \$10,000 less than Employed RI Workers with No Disability



For table see notes



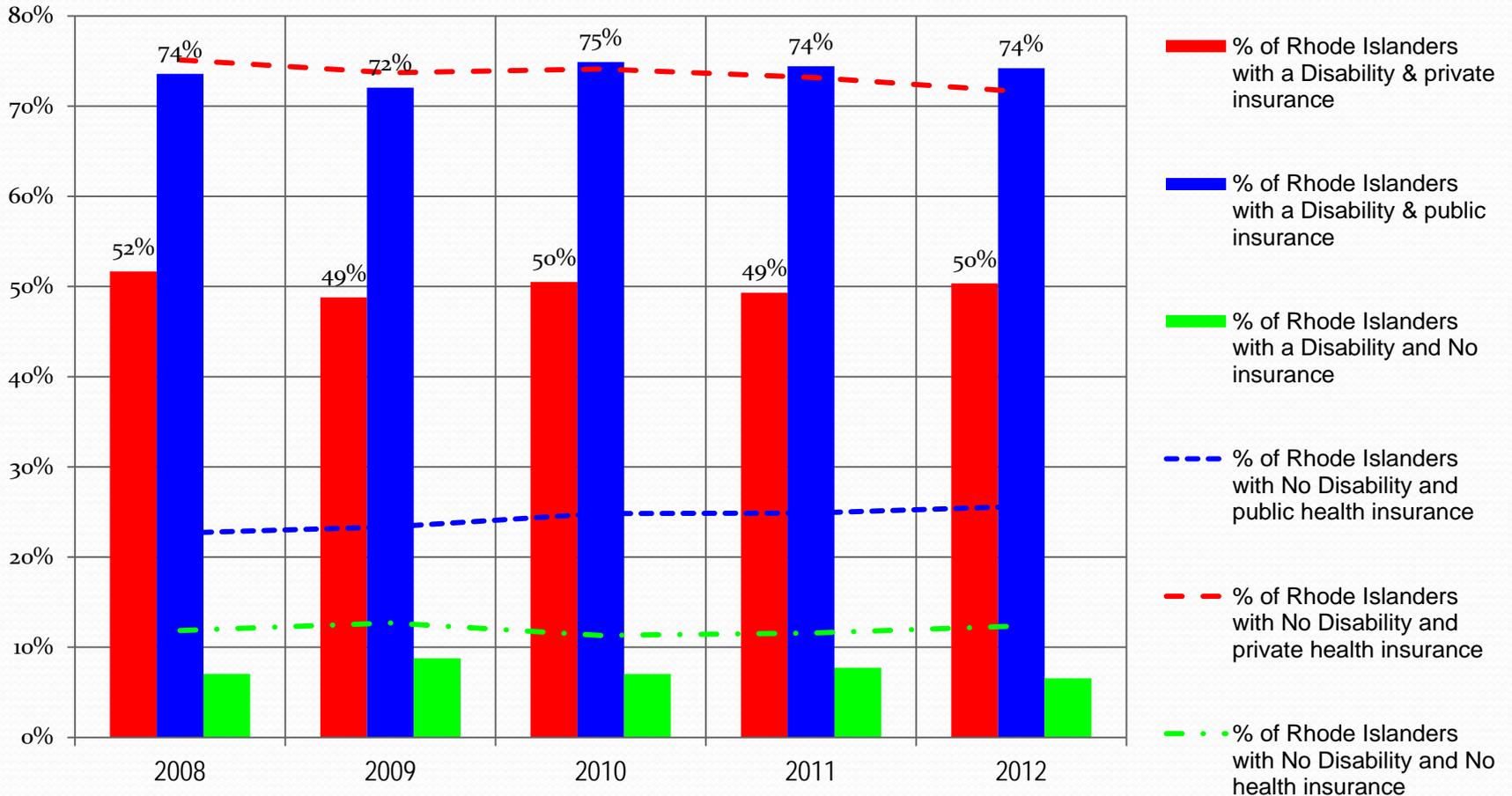
# While only 62.5% of Rhode Islanders with a Disability have an income at or above 150% of the poverty level (FPL), 82.5% Rhode Islanders with No Disability have an income at or above 150% FPL



For table see notes



# 74% of Rhode Islanders with a Disability have public health insurance, 72% of Rhode Islanders with No Disability have private insurance



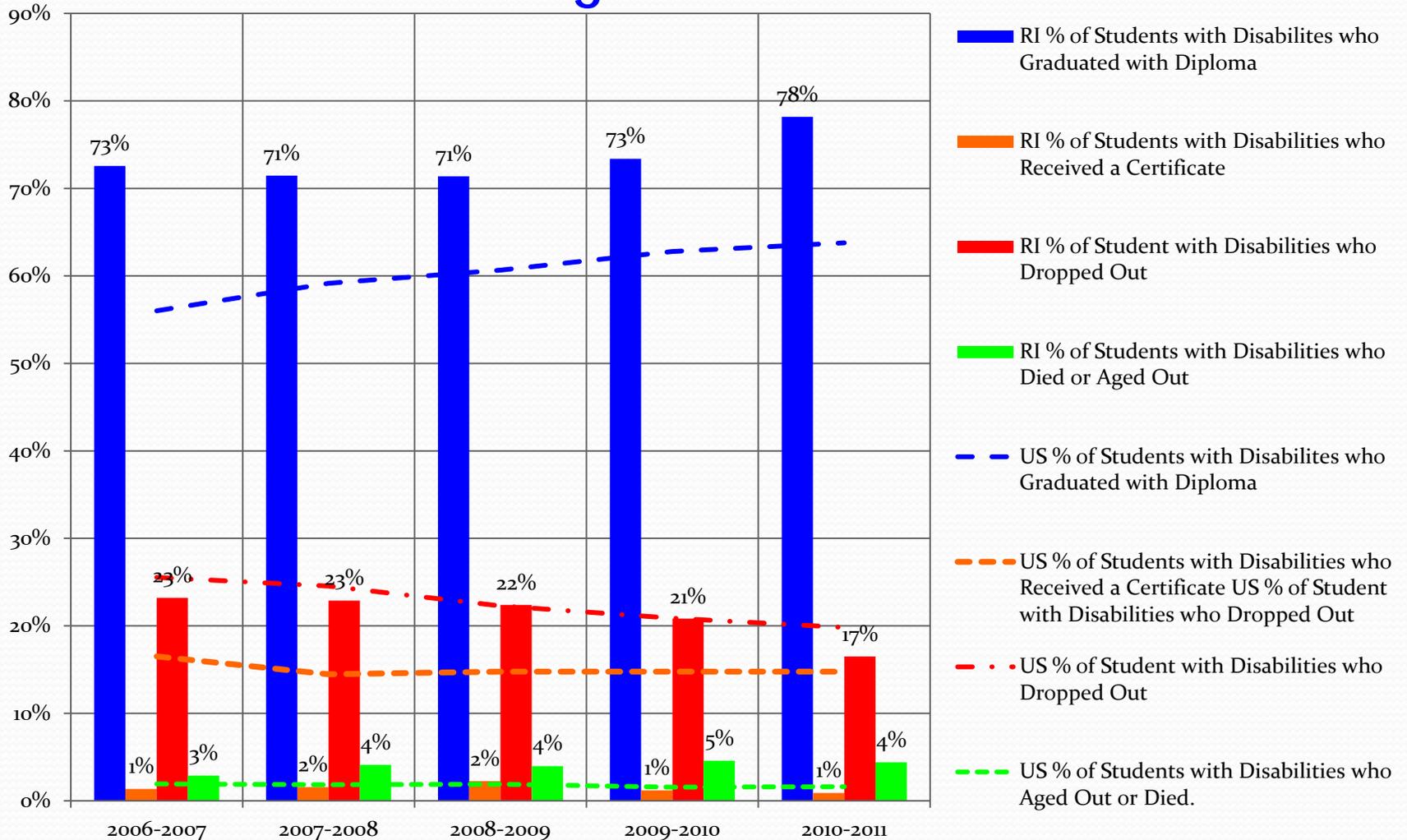


## Rhode Island Exceeds the National Average in Successful Education and Vocational Rehabilitation

- 78 % of Rhode Island Students with Disabilities Graduate with a Diploma, Exceeding the national rate of 64%
- RI Vocational Rehabilitation with 61% of Case Closures resulting in Successful Employment Outcomes, exceeds the national rate of 54%

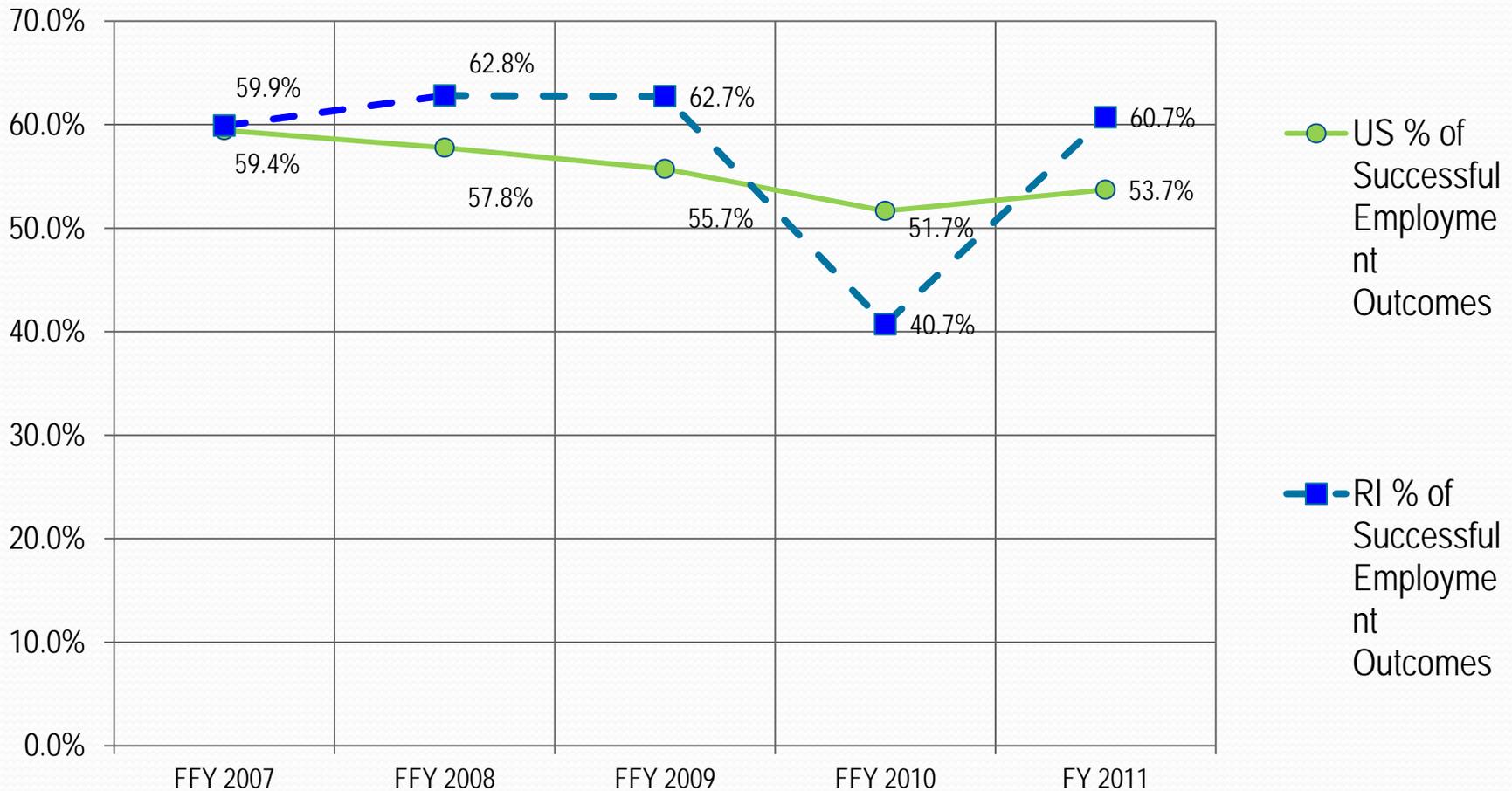


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# National Governor's Association's *A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities: Blueprint for Governors*

The National Governor's Association's *A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities: Blueprint for Governors* provides a set of five action steps for Rhode Island to re-design disability services with the goal of increased self-sufficiency and employment and decreased dependence on service delivery systems.

Employment of civilians with disabilities ages 18 to 64 years living in the community for the United States and the State of Rhode Island has remained around 30% for several decades. Resolute action is needed. The NGA's recommends five areas for state action:

1. Make disability employment part of the state workforce development strategy.
2. Find and support businesses in their efforts to employ people with disabilities.
3. Be a model employer by increasing the number of people with disabilities working in state government.
4. Prepare youth with disabilities for careers that use their full potential, providing employers with a pipeline of skilled workers.
5. Make the best use of limited resources to advance employment opportunities for people with disabilities.



# The Concerns of People with Disabilities and their Families

Every year during the week of the anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26<sup>th</sup>) the Governor's Commission on Disabilities and over 20 other state and non-profit agencies conduct a week-long series of public forums to hear the concerns of people with disabilities and their families.

The forums are open for anyone to come in and speak; representatives of the sponsoring agencies will be there to listen. It is important for state policy makers and planners to hear from people with disabilities and their families, their concerns about current services, needs that are not being addressed, and suggestions for improving services and expanding opportunities.



# RI Disability Related Budget

RI Disability Services Budget Summary	FY 2011	FY 2012	2013	2014 Revised	2015	FY 11/15
	Audited	Audited	Audited	House	House	% Change
Total Health & Human Services Agencies	\$3,009,747,027	\$2,946,701,799	\$2,976,425,478	\$3,264,815,474	\$3,649,616,217	21%
Total Education Agencies	\$107,039,332	\$95,068,271	\$87,633,694	\$93,114,365	\$92,432,395	-14%
Public Safety Agencies	\$195,016,302	\$200,809,951	\$200,295,973	\$211,740,434	\$220,904,311	13%
General Government	\$255,012,440	\$250,546,279	\$283,211,243	\$332,445,150	\$321,175,242	26%
Disability Related Grand Total	\$3,566,815,101	\$3,493,126,300	\$3,547,566,388	\$3,902,115,423	\$4,284,128,165	20%
Grand Total All State Expenditures	\$7,729,206,810	\$7,713,003,259	\$7,709,261,334	\$8,379,424,534	\$8,543,962,003	11%
% Disability Related Services / Entire State Budget	46%	45%	46%	47%	50%	9%
<b>Disability Service Expenditures By Funding Source</b>						
General Revenue Total	\$1,352,476,449	\$1,485,884,357	\$1,501,089,635	\$1,513,536,819	\$1,592,249,019	18%
Federal Funds Total	\$1,951,178,903	\$1,739,171,203	\$1,766,999,601	\$2,063,335,505	\$2,328,824,910	19%
Restricted Receipts Total	\$65,309,794	\$71,022,044	\$74,083,218	\$84,912,504	\$92,235,631	41%
Operating Transfers from Other Funds	\$15,713,074	\$13,910,904	\$19,573,320	\$37,257,390	\$51,199,259	226%
Other Funds Total	\$182,136,881	\$183,137,792	\$185,820,614	\$203,073,205	\$219,619,346	21%
<b>Grand Total Disability Related Services</b>	<b>\$3,566,815,101</b>	<b>\$3,493,126,300</b>	<b>\$3,547,566,388</b>	<b>\$3,902,115,423</b>	<b>\$4,284,128,165</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>The Entire State Budget</b>						
General Revenue Total	\$2,956,153,504	\$3,110,242,011	\$3,216,046,414	\$3,352,398,559	\$3,445,169,968	17%
Federal Funds Total	\$2,748,818,213	\$2,599,077,717	\$2,519,807,446	\$2,929,987,677	\$3,086,526,049	12%
Restricted Receipts Total	\$158,884,619	\$184,098,087	\$198,366,892	\$278,713,493	\$283,055,536	78%
Other Funds Total *	\$1,865,350,474	\$1,819,585,444	\$1,775,040,582	\$1,909,099,572	\$1,965,443,788	5%
<b>Grand Total State Funding</b>	<b>\$7,729,206,810</b>	<b>\$7,713,003,259</b>	<b>\$7,709,261,334</b>	<b>\$8,470,199,301</b>	<b>\$8,780,195,341</b>	<b>14%</b>
<b>% Disability Related Services / Total State Funding</b>						
General Revenue Total	46%	48%	47%	45%	46%	1%
Federal Funds Total	71%	67%	70%	70%	75%	6%
Restricted Receipts Total	41%	39%	37%	30%	33%	-21%
Other Funds Total *	11%	11%	12%	13%	14%	30%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>6%</b>



MOTION: To adopt the Packet of Recommendation, as presented  
Motion moved by JR, seconded by RMcM, passed unanimously



***4:30 Adjournment, Timothy Flynn***

MOTION: To adjourn at 4:55 PM  
Motion moved by JR, seconded by RMcM, passed unanimously