

**2019 -- H 6188**

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**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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

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**H O U S E   R E S O L U T I O N**

**EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF THE HONORABLE EDWARD  
SEAGA, FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF JAMAICA**

Introduced By: Representatives Ranglin-Vassell, Shekarchi, Chippendale, Diaz, and  
Williams

Date Introduced: June 05, 2019

Referred To: House read and passed

1           WHEREAS, The Honorable Edward Seaga was born on May 30, 1930, in Boston,  
2 Massachusetts, to Philip and Erna Seaga, both of whom were of mixed Jamaican heritage. When  
3 he was three months old, his parents returned to Jamaica, where he was raised. He graduated from  
4 Wolmer's Boys' School in Jamaica and went to college in the United States, graduating from  
5 Harvard University in 1952, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in the Social Sciences; and

6           WHEREAS, Before embarking on his public service career, Mr. Seaga had a very  
7 successful career as a music promoter and producer, particularly Jamaican music. In the late  
8 fifties, he supervised and produced albums of Jamaican music before he founded the West Indies  
9 Records Limited (WIRL) in 1959, which went on to become the most successful record company  
10 in Jamaica and the West Indies; and

11           WHEREAS, Mr. Seaga's political career had begun before Jamaica gained its  
12 independence from Great Britain in 1962, when he was nominated to serve in the Upper House of  
13 the Parliament of Jamaica in 1959. He was the youngest member ever appointed to the  
14 Legislative Council of Jamaica; and

15           WHEREAS, In 1961, Mr. Seaga took part in the drafting of the Constitution of Jamaica,  
16 which took effect when Jamaica attained its independence in 1962. Before his passing, he was the  
17 last remaining member of the Jamaican leaders who had drafted the Constitution. In 1962, he was  
18 elected to be a Member of Parliament, representing West Kingston, a seat he held for the next  
19 forty-three years until his retirement. Mr. Seaga was the longest-serving member of Parliament in

1 the history of both Jamaica and the entire Caribbean region; and

2 WHEREAS, Mr. Seaga went on to serve as a Cabinet Minister of Development and  
3 Welfare, where he led the way in fostering economic development in the poorer communities as  
4 well as the building of new schools and affordable housing, and served as the Cabinet Minister of  
5 Finance where he played vital roles in the development of the Jamaica Stock Exchange and  
6 Jamaica Citizen's Bank. He also served for thirty years as the leader of the Jamaica Labour Party,  
7 and was the Opposition Leader for many years before becoming Prime Minister; and

8 WHEREAS, Mr. Seaga became the fifth Prime Minister of Jamaica on October 30, 1980,  
9 after the Labour Party won a landslide victory in the election. He would remain Prime Minister  
10 for almost a decade, and garnered credit for forging closer ties with the United States, for  
11 spearheading economic prosperity, and for advocating for Constitutional reforms that included re-  
12 writing the human rights section of the Constitution, providing for a Charter of Fundamental  
13 Rights and Freedoms, and creating the post of Public Defender; and

14 WHEREAS, In 2005, Mr. Seaga retired from elected public service and embarked on a  
15 career in academia in which he taught, wrote articles, and conducted research at the University of  
16 the West Indies and the University of Technology; and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Seaga was the loving husband of Carla Vendryes, and the devoted  
18 father of Christopher, Andrew, Anabella, and Gabrielle; now, therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and  
20 Providence Plantations hereby expresses its condolences on the passing of the Honorable Edward  
21 Seaga, former Prime Minister of Jamaica; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
23 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable Andrew Holness, Prime Minister  
24 of Jamaica, and Carla Vendryes and Family.

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