

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

SENATE RESOLUTION

**CELEBRATING MARCH 25, 2021, AS THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK
INDEPENDENCE DAY AND CELEBRATING DEMOCRACY IN GREECE AND THE
UNITED STATES**

Introduced By: Senators Raptakis, Gallo, Euer, Kallman, Algieri, Ruggerio, Lombardi,
Seveney, DiPalma, Coyne, and Anderson

Date Introduced: March 18, 2021

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, On March 25, 1821, the Feast Day of the Annunciation, the Greek nation
2 reclaimed its ancient heritage as the "Cradle of Democracy" by overthrowing the yoke of
3 oppression which had enslaved its people since the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Conquered by
4 the Ottoman Turks in the 15th century, Greece waged a successful war of Independence (1821-
5 1829) and re-instituted a democratic form of government; and

6 WHEREAS, The People of the United States generously offered humanitarian assistance
7 to the Greek people during their struggle for independence; and

8 WHEREAS, The price for the people of Greece to hold onto their common values in their
9 region was high, as hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed in Greece during World War
10 II; and

11 WHEREAS, Greece is one of only three nations in the world, beyond the former British
12 Empire, that has been allied with the United States in every major international conflict over the
13 last 100 years; and

14 WHEREAS, Greece, located in a region where Christianity meets Islam and Judaism,
15 maintains excellent relations with Muslim nations and Israel, and demonstrates religious
16 tolerance; and

17 WHEREAS, The Ancient Macedonians were Hellenes and the northern Province of
18 Greece, Macedonia and the Hellenic descendants; and

19 WHEREAS, Greece and the United States are at the forefront of the effort for freedom,

1 democracy, peace, stability, and human rights; and

2 WHEREAS, Many American Philhellenes participated and fought in the Greek War of
3 Independence. One such individual was George Wilson from Providence, Rhode Island, who
4 served as a gunman in the Greek fleet, most notably in the battle against the Turkish navy in
5 Nafaktos Bay, Greece; and

6 WHEREAS, The United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited Greece on
7 October 4, 2019, where he met with Greek leaders and together they signed the Mutual Defense
8 Corporation Agreement (MDCA); and

9 WHEREAS, Turkey has continued to destabilize the Aegean Sea and the Eastern
10 Mediterranean Sea region. As a result, Greece, Israel and Cyprus have formed a trilateral
11 cooperation agreement against the aggressive regional policies of Turkey. Each country's strong
12 relationship with the United States, as well as the prospect of an Eastern Mediterranean pipeline
13 enabling safe transmission of gas to Western Europe are critical to security and energy stability.
14 Passage of the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act of 2019 will facilitate
15 energy and security cooperation between the United States, Greece, Cyprus and Israel; and

16 WHEREAS, A high-level review of the United States-Greece Strategic Dialogue took
17 place in Greece on September 28, 2020, which underscored Greece's importance to the United
18 States as a geostrategic partner in the Eastern Mediterranean and Balkans and as an important
19 NATO ally; and

20 WHEREAS, In support of the Greece 2021 Committee established by the Government of
21 Greece, the United States Mission in Greece has launched a campaign to celebrate the
22 bicentennial of the Independence of Greece and the 200 years of friendship between the United
23 States and Greece; and

24 WHEREAS, It is proper and desirable for the United States to celebrate this Anniversary
25 with the Greek people and to reaffirm the democratic principles from which these two great
26 nations were born; now, therefore be it

27 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby celebrates March 25,
28 2021, as the 200th Anniversary of Greek Independence, reaffirms Rhode Island's abiding
29 commitment to the magnificent principles of democracy and religious freedom, and urges Turkey
30 to respect the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
32 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church of
33 Cranston, the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church of Pawtucket, the St. Spyridon Greek
34 Orthodox Church of Newport, members of the Rhode Island Congressional delegation, the

- 1 Honorable Stratos Efthymiou, Consul General of the Hellenic Republic in Boston, Archbishop
- 2 Elpidophoros of the Greek Archdiocese of America.

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