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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

SENATE RESOLUTION

**HONORING RHODE ISLAND FAMILY COURT CHIEF JUDGE HAIGANUSH R.
BEDROSIAN ON HER RETIREMENT AFTER THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED
AND DEVOTED SERVICE TO OUR STATE AND THE CITIZENS OF RHODE ISLAND**

Introduced By: Senators Paiva Weed, Ruggerio, Algieri, Lombardi, and Walaska

Date Introduced: January 06, 2016

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, Chief Judge Bedrosian, the daughter of Armenian immigrants, grew up in
2 Cranston, Rhode Island. She graduated from Cranston High School East, received a Bachelor of
3 Arts degree from Pembroke College in 1965, prior to its merger with Brown University, and
4 attained a law degree from Suffolk University Law School in 1971. After graduating from law
5 school, she began her distinguished legal career serving as a Special Assistant Attorney General
6 with the Criminal Prosecution Unit. Early in her legal career she also worked in private practice
7 specializing in family law, and served as Assistant General Counsel to the Providence &
8 Worcester Railroad Co.; and

9 WHEREAS, Chief Judge Bedrosian was a woman ahead of her time who served as a
10 trailblazer for the many women who followed her. She forged ahead despite being told by one of
11 her professors at Brown University/Pembroke College that "Women don't go to law school." She
12 was one of only ten women in her class at Suffolk Law School; and

13 WHEREAS, Chief Judge Bedrosian became the first woman to serve on the Family Court
14 bench after being nominated for the position in 1980 by Governor J. Joseph Garrahy. As
15 Associate Justice she presided over every calendar within the jurisdiction of the Rhode Island
16 Family Court. In 2010, she became the first woman to lead the Family Court after being named
17 Chief Judge by Governor Donald L. Carcieri; and

18 WHEREAS, Under Chief Judge Bedrosian's direction, the Family Court broadened the
19 mediation program in the State Department of Children, Youth and Families, and expanded the

1 Family Treatment Drug Court. Court rules and the forms used to guide the filing process were
2 also revised during her tenure. In 2013, Chief Judge Bedrosian took the lead in hosting a two-day
3 conference on sex trafficking and exploitation of children in the child-welfare system. This
4 conference was attended by a distinguished group of four hundred attendees from law
5 enforcement, child-welfare workers, clinicians, and investigators from across the state of Rhode
6 Island. She has worked tirelessly throughout her distinguished legal career to protect the most
7 vulnerable members of our society; and

8 WHEREAS, Chief Judge Bedrosian is a member of many professional associations
9 including the Rhode Island Bar Association, the National Association of Women Judges and the
10 Trial Lawyers Association of America. She also founded the Rhode Island Trial Judges
11 Association and served as its President for several years. Chief Judge Bedrosian was instrumental
12 in creating statewide standards for guardians ad litem in Family Court cases. She was also a
13 member of numerous boards and commissions; and

14 WHEREAS, Chief Judge Bedrosian was also an accomplished teacher. She taught fifth
15 grade at Finberg Elementary School in the Brockton/Attleboro School System for six years. She
16 was also an instructor at Roger Williams College, the University of Rhode Island and Rhode
17 Island College; and

18 WHEREAS, Chief Judge Bedrosian has received numerous awards during her
19 distinguished career. She received the Sojourner House Service Award in 2011, she was the first
20 recipient of the Cranston East Annual Distinguished Alumni Award, the Florence K. Murray
21 Award from the Rhode Island Bar Association, the Cranston Hall of Fame Award presented by
22 the City of Cranston, and the Armenian Woman of the Year presented by the Armenian Masonic
23 Degree Team; and

24 WHEREAS, Throughout her life she has been a mentor, coach, confidant, friend, and a
25 highly valued and respected leader in her community, admired widely for her reasoning powers.
26 She is a woman of deep faith and is devoted to her family, friends and church. It is fitting that the
27 translation of her first name, Haiganush, means sweet woman; now, therefore be it

28 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
29 hereby honors and congratulates Rhode Island Family Court Chief Judge Haiganush R. Bedrosian
30 on her retirement after thirty-five years of distinguished, devoted and exemplary service to our
31 State and the citizens of Rhode Island; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
2 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Honorable Chief Judge Haiganush R.
3 Bedrosian.

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