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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

SENATE RESOLUTION

COMMEMORATING THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF THE REVEREND DR.
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Introduced By: Senators Metts, Paiva Weed, Ruggerio, Goodwin, and Jabour

Date Introduced: January 19, 2016

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, In the altruistic words of the esteemed Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Life's
2 most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'" He devoted his life to the
3 advancement of civil rights and service to one's community, and he helped to move us closer to
4 the ideals on which America was founded, a nation of freedom and justice for all; and

5 WHEREAS, Born on January 15, 1929, Dr. King grew up in Atlanta, Georgia, attending
6 segregated public schools. After earning his high school diploma, he started college at the age of
7 fifteen and went on to obtain his doctorate in 1955; and

8 WHEREAS, During his lifetime, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. changed the course of
9 history. He led a nonviolent revolution that would forever change the social and political
10 landscape of America; and

11 WHEREAS, The mirror that the Reverend Dr. King held before the national conscience
12 revealed the ugliness of racism and hatred that had divided America throughout its history, and
13 neither the carnage of civil war, nor the self-examination that Dr. King forced upon the nation,
14 has fully eradicated the injustices which are still prevalent to this day; and

15 WHEREAS, There is no doubt that Dr. King challenged us to make real the promise of
16 America. When others called for blood and violence, he eloquently preached nonviolence. For
17 him, violence was a firestorm which must eventually consume the arsonist, and although he was a
18 victim of violence throughout his public career, he never gave in to the darkness cloaking this
19 great evil. He believed that violence did not change hearts, that racial equality and social justice

1 were more likely to come about through appeals to the public's collective conscience and by the
2 examples being set by those advocating social justice and nonviolence; and

3 WHEREAS, The Reverend Dr. King also changed the course of history and inspired all
4 citizens to help build what he called "the beloved community," and to live up to the purpose and
5 potential of America. His famed "I Have a Dream" speech before the Lincoln Memorial, his
6 ironclad will, and the true justness of his cause forever changed and advanced freedom, equality,
7 opportunity, and brotherhood for all; and

8 WHEREAS, This year marks the 30th Anniversary of the nationwide observance of the
9 Martin Luther King, Jr., federal holiday, honoring one of the most influential and iconic leaders
10 of the civil rights movement. It is a time for the people of our state to recognize Dr. King's
11 teachings by embracing and promoting his tireless, undeniable efforts toward equality, and by
12 finding ways to give back to our communities; now, therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
14 hereby commemorates the birthday of the great Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We honor
15 not only the man and his accomplishments, but also the continuing process of social
16 enlightenment he founded which lives with us still, ever pressing us to move beyond what we are
17 and what we think we can be. A prophet of hope, Dr. King left a legacy which will live forever;
18 and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
20 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to all general office holders, members of the
21 Rhode Island Congressional Delegation, and the Martin Luther King, Jr., State Holiday
22 Commission.

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