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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

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SENATE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING FEBRUARY 15, 2024, AS "THE 1ST RHODE ISLAND REGIMENT/BLACK REGIMENT RECOGNITION DAY" TO COMMEMORATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLACK SOLDIERS DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Introduced By: Senator Linda L. Ujifusa

Date Introduced: February 15, 2024

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, It is important to recognize the role of Black people in every aspect of  
2 American history since the colonial days; and

3 WHEREAS, There is little public awareness of the contributions of Black people during  
4 the American Revolutionary War; and

5 WHEREAS, Despite the horrors of enslavement suffered by Black people in America,  
6 some fought to gain their freedom, as well as American Independence, by becoming members of  
7 the 1st Rhode Island Regiment during the American Revolutionary War; and

8 WHEREAS, The 1st Rhode Island Regiment was an integrated unit composed of Black,  
9 White and Indigenous soldiers, who served together from 1778 through the end of the war in  
10 1783; and

11 WHEREAS, In August of 1778, the First Rhode Island Regiment stood bravely on the  
12 right flank of the Continental Army at Portsmouth, Rhode Island, and drove back three Hessian  
13 charges and held the line against the British forces to “distinguish itself with deeds of great  
14 valor”; and

15 WHEREAS, The Newport County NAACP, the Newport Middle Passage Port Marker  
16 Project, the Bristol Middle Passage Port Marker Project, the Rhode Island Slave History  
17 Medallions Project, the Battle of Rhode Island Association, the Portsmouth Historical Society and  
18 other historical organizations have been working to educate the public about enslaved people in  
19 Rhode Island and their contribution to the establishment of America during the colonial period;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, As the 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence  
3 in 1776 approaches, it is important to ensure that the history and contributions of Black people  
4 during the American Revolutionary War not be forgotten; now, therefore be it

5 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby recognizes February  
6 15, 2024, as "The 1st Rhode Island Regiment/Black Regiment Day" to commemorate the  
7 contributions of Black soldiers during the American Revolutionary War; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby expresses its deep gratitude to the Black soldiers  
9 who served in the 1st Rhode Island Regiment and recognizes that this history must be made more  
10 known and never be forgotten; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
12 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable Joseph Biden, President of the  
13 United States, the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation, the Honorable Daniel McKee,  
14 Governor of the State of Rhode Island, the Newport County NAACP, the Newport Middle  
15 Passage Port Marker Project, the Bristol Middle Passage Port Marker Project, the Rhode Island  
16 Slave History Medallions organization, the Battle of Rhode Island Association, and the  
17 Portsmouth Historical Society.

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