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**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2010**

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**SENATE RESOLUTION**

**HONORING THE  
BLACKSTONE VALLEY TOURISM COUNCIL  
ON THE CELEBRATION OF ITS TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY**

Introduced By: Senators Connors, McBurney, DaPonte, Doyle, and Picard

Date Introduced: March 09, 2010

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1           WHEREAS, On April 8, 2010, the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council will celebrate the  
2 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its founding; and

3           WHEREAS, The Blackstone Valley Tourism Council is a non-profit corporation  
4 registered as a 501(c)(3) educational organization and was authorized under Section 42-63.1-5 of  
5 the Rhode Island General Laws as the State-designated regional tourism development agency for  
6 the Blackstone Valley of Rhode Island; and

7           WHEREAS, A twenty-one member Board of Directors with a full-time professional staff  
8 manages the Council. The Council's development region follows the length and width of the  
9 Blackstone River Watershed, from the many tributaries in southern Massachusetts to the river's  
10 termination at the headwaters of the Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island. The Council represents  
11 the cities of Pawtucket, Central Falls, and Woonsocket, and the towns of Cumberland, Lincoln,  
12 North Smithfield, Smithfield, Glocester, and Burrillville; and

13           WHEREAS, Since 1985, the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council has been at the  
14 forefront of sustainable destination development, community building, resiliency, education, and  
15 scholarly research. The Council was the first destination in the world to receive the United  
16 Nations World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) Ulysses Prize that merits distinction for  
17 innovative contributions to tourism policy, tourism sustainable planning, environment protection,  
18 and new technologies. In 2006, the Council, achieved the UNWTO.Sbest Certification in tourism

1 governance, the only organization in the United States to earn this certification; and

2 WHEREAS, The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in 2008 recognized the  
3 Blackstone Valley Tourism Council with its Tourism for Tomorrow Destination Award, one of  
4 the most prestigious sustainable tourism development awards in the world. The WTTC noted the  
5 Council’s integrated, community-centered, resilient approach to tourism development and  
6 community building; and

7 WHEREAS, The Blackstone Valley Tourism Council works to bridge gaps between the  
8 economy, the environment, and the people that live in the Blackstone River Valley. This  
9 “multiple-bottom line” approach is the definition of sustainable community development. The  
10 Council’s concept of tourism is about creating a unique sense of place through social, economic,  
11 and physical development for Valley residents, and, in turn, creating a destination for visitors;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, The Blackstone Valley does not have exotic beaches, renowned rainforests,  
14 or dense metropolises. What the Valley does have is a story: a story of colonization, religious  
15 freedom, industrialization, immigration, pollution, poverty, urban decay, and of rebirth and  
16 sustainable redevelopment. This story is not stagnant; it is a living and evolving entity that is  
17 made up of the natural, built, and cultural environment of the Valley; and

18 WHEREAS, The work that the Tourism Council accomplishes could not be completed  
19 without the breadth and strength of the partnerships that have been developed. These include  
20 strong relationships with local social and community development organizations, municipalities,  
21 regional and state economic development organizations, educational institutions, as well as  
22 national and international entities. The Council has the ability to unite with any of these partners  
23 depending on the task and specialization that is needed; and

24 WHEREAS, Since its beginning, the Tourism Council has worked to develop, promote,  
25 and expand the economic and community development base for cities and towns in Rhode  
26 Island’s Blackstone River Valley to create a viable visitor and cultural destination, while  
27 continually working to improve the region’s quality of life, environment, and recreational uses,  
28 and preserving the region’s historic heritage; and

29 WHEREAS, The Council works closely with public and private partnerships, works as an  
30 interpreter and educator of the history and ecology of the Blackstone River, initiates ongoing  
31 international relationships of major importance to the region, works closely on community  
32 development projects with cities and towns, provides input on future riverfront and economic  
33 development, and develops various recreational activities; and

34 WHEREAS, The Council operates on the philosophy that sustained economic

1 development in the region must rely on sustained historical preservation and environmental  
2 protection. To that end, the Council has promoted the region to residents and visitors through  
3 Geo-tourism-principled development of the region's rich farm to factory heritage, cultural  
4 diversity, and eco-tourism; and

5 WHEREAS, The Blackstone River Valley has significant importance to the United States  
6 and Rhode Island in that the region is the actual birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution,  
7 which began in 1790 in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, when Samuel Slater launched textile  
8 manufacturing in a wooden mill on the banks of the Blackstone River; and

9 WHEREAS, Through its visionary mission, the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council  
10 operates on the philosophy of taking a positive leadership role in initiating many exciting,  
11 challenging, innovative, and inventive tourism development products, projects, and programs;  
12 now, therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
14 hereby extends its sincere congratulations and wishes for continued success to the Blackstone  
15 Valley Tourism Council in marking its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and he hereby is authorized and directed to  
17 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council.

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