

2018 -- S 2830

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2018

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SENATE RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF BARBARA PIERCE  
BUSH, FORMER FIRST LADY OF THE UNITED STATES

Introduced By: Senators Algiere, Ruggiero, McCaffrey, Goodwin, and Lynch Prata

Date Introduced: April 26, 2018

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1           WHEREAS, It is with great sadness that this Senate has learned of the passing of former  
2 First Lady, Barbara Pierce Bush. She will forever be remembered for her kindness, grace and  
3 class, and for being the matriarch of the Bush Family. One of the highest compliments one can  
4 give to a person who has passed is to say they have had a well-lived life. Barbara Bush certainly  
5 lived up to and fulfilled that high standard. She served her family, her community and our nation  
6 with integrity and dignity and her loss is deeply felt in every corner of our nation; and

7           WHEREAS, Barbara Bush was born Barbara Pierce on June 18, 1925, in Manhattan,  
8 New York City, the daughter of Pauline and Marvin Pierce, who was the President of the McCall  
9 Corporation, which published the women's magazines Redbook and McCalls. Mrs. Bush was  
10 raised in the New York suburb of Rye, with her three siblings, Scott, Martha and James. One of  
11 her ancestors was Franklin Pierce, the 14th President of the United States; and

12           WHEREAS, Mrs. Bush met her future husband, George Herbert Walker Bush at the age  
13 of sixteen while attending a dance. After eighteen months of courtship, she and the future  
14 President became engaged, just before he went off to serve as a United States Navy torpedo  
15 bomber pilot in World War II. While serving our nation heroically during the war, he named three  
16 of his planes after her. They were married on January 6, 1945, a marriage that would last 73 years  
17 until her passing; and

18           WHEREAS, Barbara and President Bush had six children together, the Honorable  
19 George W. Bush, who would follow his father's footsteps to become President of the United

1 States, Robin Bush, who died of Leukemia at the age of three, John Ellis, the Honorable "Jeb"  
2 Bush, Sr., who became the Governor of Florida, Neil Bush, Marvin Bush, and Dorothy Bush  
3 Koch. Through the years, as the Bush family moved across the country and engaged in different  
4 business ventures, they became ensconced within the American political scene with Barbara Bush  
5 the one constant, the anchor of the family, the glue that kept everyone together, and the loving but  
6 occasionally stern presence that kept her loved ones on the straight and narrow. Over time, she  
7 became unequivocally recognized as the family's "Matriarch"; and

8 WHEREAS, Barbara Bush became the "Second Lady" of the United States after her  
9 husband was elected Vice President in the 1980 Presidential election. Around this time her son  
10 Neil was diagnosed with dyslexia and she immediately became interested in issues related to  
11 dyslexia illiteracy. She researched and learned about the factors that caused illiteracy and worked  
12 tirelessly to fight this problem. During this period, she wrote a book about her family and donated  
13 all proceeds from the book to literacy charities; and

14 WHEREAS, When her husband ran for the Presidency in 1988, Barbara Bush became  
15 only the second candidate's spouse, after Eleanor Roosevelt in 1940, to speak at the national party  
16 convention that nominated her husband. By this point in her life, Mrs. Bush had become  
17 comfortable speaking in public and was widely viewed as being a significant asset in her  
18 husband's successful campaign for President; and

19 WHEREAS, As First Lady, Barbara Bush was well-known and widely-admired for her  
20 down-to-earth mannerisms, her self-deprecating sense of humor, the pride she took in her white  
21 hair, and her refusal to be obsessed with designer clothes. She was a woman that any woman or  
22 man could relate to and respect. Mrs. Bush continued her fight against illiteracy as First Lady.  
23 She appeared on the Oprah Winfrey show to raise awareness of the problem and helped to  
24 develop and create the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy. She was also very active in  
25 the White House Historical Association, and worked hard to modernize and strengthen the White  
26 House Preservation Fund, which she renamed the White House Endowment Trust. Altogether,  
27 she raised \$25 million for its endowment. She also bravely battled Graves Disease while serving  
28 as First Lady, and had become one of the most beloved first ladies in American history, earning a  
29 reputation with the White House staff as being the most friendly and easygoing First Lady they  
30 had ever served; and

31 WHEREAS, When her time as First Lady ended, Barbara Bush continued her vital role as  
32 the matriarch of the family and her numerous charitable endeavors. On September 28, 1995, the  
33 Bush Family announced the creation of the Barbara Bush Children's Hospital in Portland, Maine.  
34 In an emotional gathering, Mrs. Bush recalled the life of her daughter Robin, who had passed

1 away of Leukemia at the age of three. Since leaving the White House in 1993, Mrs. Bush has  
2 seen her son, George W. Bush, become President of the United States and has served our nation  
3 as a distinguished and beloved elder stateswoman. She bravely fought numerous illnesses, and the  
4 elegant grace with which she has aged and dealt with her various illnesses and ailments has been  
5 admired by all Americans. Her passing on April 17, 2018, saddened all Americans though we will  
6 always be thankful and grateful for her service to our nation. She most certainly led a life well-  
7 lived; now, therefore be it

8           RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
9 hereby extends its deepest condolences on the passing of the Former First Lady Barbara Bush;  
10 and be it further

11           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
12 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Honorable George H.W. Bush.

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