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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

SENATE RESOLUTION

COMMEMORATING MARCH 25, 2024, AS THE 203RD ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK
INDEPENDENCE DAY AND CELEBRATING DEMOCRACY IN GREECE AND THE
UNITED STATES

Introduced By: Senators Raptakis, Gallo, and Euer

Date Introduced: March 28, 2024

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, On March 25, 1821, the Feast Day of the Annunciation, the Greek nation
2 reclaimed its ancient heritage as the "Cradle of Democracy" by overthrowing the yoke of
3 oppression which had enslaved its people since the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Conquered by
4 the Ottoman Turks in the 15th century, Greece waged a successful war of Independence (1821-
5 1829) and re-instituted a democratic form of government; and

6 WHEREAS, The People of the United States generously offered humanitarian assistance
7 to the Greek people during their struggle for independence; and

8 WHEREAS, The price for the people of Greece to hold onto their common values in their
9 region was high, as hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed in Greece during World War
10 II; and

11 WHEREAS, Greece is one of only three nations in the world, beyond the former British
12 Empire, that has been allied with the United States in every major international conflict over the
13 last 100 years; and

14 WHEREAS, Greece, located in a region where Christianity meets Islam and Judaism,
15 maintains excellent relations with Muslim nations and Israel, and demonstrates religious
16 tolerance; and

17 WHEREAS, The Ancient Macedonians were Hellenes and the northern Province of
18 Greece, Macedonia and the Hellenic descendants; and

19 WHEREAS, Greece and the United States are at the forefront of the effort for freedom,

1 democracy, peace, stability, and human rights; and

2 WHEREAS, Many American Philhellenes participated and fought in the Greek War of
3 Independence. One such individual was George Wilson from Providence, Rhode Island, who
4 served as a gunman in the Greek fleet, most notably in the battle against the Turkish Navy in
5 Nafpaktos Bay, Greece; and

6 WHEREAS, United States Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken met with Greek Prime
7 Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis on January 6, 2024, in Crete. The two underscored the strength of
8 the bilateral relationship and shared commitment as NATO Allies to democracy, peace, and
9 prosperity. They discussed the ongoing situation in the Middle East. The Secretary thanked the
10 Prime Minister for Greece's regional leadership, including its continued support for Ukraine,
11 delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance to civilians in Gaza, and for freedom of navigation
12 in the Red Sea through its participation in operation Prosperity Guardian; now, therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby celebrates March 25,
14 2024, as the 203rd Anniversary of Greek Independence, reaffirms Rhode Island's abiding
15 commitment to the magnificent principles of democracy and religious freedom, and urges Turkey
16 to respect the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby commends the Greek-American community for its
18 contributions to Rhode Island and its role as a bridge between two countries; 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 the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church of
21 Cranston, the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church of Pawtucket, the St. Spyridon Greek
22 Orthodox Church of Newport, members of the Rhode Island Congressional delegation, the
23 Honorable Symeon Tegos, Consul General of the Hellenic Republic in Boston, Archbishop
24 Elpidophoros of the Greek Archdiocese of America.

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