

2023 -- H 5063

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N

**EXPRESSING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF BRIGADIER GENERAL
MICHAEL T. BYRNES, UNITED STATES ARMY, RETIRED**

Introduced By: Representatives Donovan, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Azzinaro,
Chippendale, Kennedy, Diaz, Newberry, Shallcross Smith, and Tanzi
Date Introduced: January 11, 2023

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sadness that this House has learned of the passing of United
2 States Army Brigadier General, Retired, Michael T. Byrnes. He was the devoted husband of
3 Marie-Elena Fasano. General Byrnes is a native of Bristol, Rhode Island, a son of the late
4 Honorable Thomas Byrnes, Jr., a former distinguished member of the Rhode Island House of
5 Representatives and Constance G. Byrnes; and

6 WHEREAS, General Byrnes attended local schools, and graduated from Colt Memorial
7 High School in 1963. General Byrnes proceeded to attend Providence College where he attained a
8 bachelor's degree in 1967 and was an ROTC student. Upon graduation, he was commissioned as
9 an Artillery Officer in the United States Army; and

10 WHEREAS, General Byrnes served our nation with honor and distinction in numerous
11 career assignments that have included being stationed in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Vietnam,
12 Wildflecken, Germany, El Paso, Texas, Hong Kong, and China; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1973, General Byrnes attained a Master's degree in International
14 Relations from the University of New Hampshire. From 1982 to 1984, General Byrnes studied
15 Mandarin Chinese at the British Ministry of Defense Chinese Language School in both Hong
16 Kong and at Beijing University. General Byrnes is also an honor graduate of both the United
17 States Army Command and General Staff College, and the United States Naval War College,
18 where he served as an Army Senior Fellow; and

19 WHEREAS, In 1987, General Byrnes served as a military liaison officer to the United

1 States Consulate in Hong Kong. From 1991 to 1997, he was assigned to the United States
2 Embassy in Beijing, China, to serve as the United States Defense Attaché to China.
3 Simultaneously, he served as the first American Defense Attaché to Mongolia; and

4 WHEREAS, General Byrnes retired from the United States Army on January 1, 1998,
5 after thirty years of honorable and devoted service to our nation. In 2009, General Byrnes was
6 inducted into the Defense Intelligence Agency's Attaché Hall of Fame. General Byrnes received
7 numerous awards and honors in recognition of his distinguished military career, including the
8 Combat Infantryman's Badge, Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Defense Distinguished Service Medal,
9 Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Army
10 Commendation Medal and the Vietnam Service Medal; and

11 WHEREAS, General Byrnes also had a distinguished private sector career. He helped
12 numerous United States companies access the massive Chinese market. From 1998 to 2006 he
13 worked for Rockwell International Operations in China, where he reported directly to the
14 Rockwell President and COO and was responsible for all Rockwell International Operations.
15 From 2006 to 2008, he served as the President of Tyco International in China, where he was
16 responsible for establishing Tyco's corporate operations in China, and for promoting Tyco's
17 diverse business interests in China. General Byrnes lived and worked in China for more than
18 twenty years. General Byrnes was very active in community affairs and was a Board Member of
19 numerous American business associations; and

20 WHEREAS, In 2008, General Byrnes returned to Bristol and became very involved in
21 community affairs, where he served as the Patriotic Speaker at the 2000 Bristol Fourth of July
22 celebration, was an original member of the Kickemuit Education Foundation, Chair of the Bristol
23 Economic Development Commission since 2009, Team Leader for the Bristol Comprehensive
24 Plan Update from 2007 to 2008, served as an advisor to the Rhode Island Economic Corporation
25 China, was the owner of a local business, Olde China Trader, and volunteered his time in support
26 of numerous other local and statewide civic and charitable endeavors; and

27 WHEREAS, Besides his wife, Marie-Elena, General Byrnes leaves behind his children,
28 Christopher John Byrnes, and his wife, Emily, Meredith Byrnes Turner, and Patrick Michael
29 Byrnes and his wife, Kristin, and four grandchildren, Megan Alana Byrnes, Thomas Michael
30 Byrnes, Declan Christopher Byrnes and Aiden Michael Byrnes. He is also survived by his
31 siblings, Christopher Byrnes and his wife, Mary, CWO John Fitzgerald Byrnes, United States
32 Coast Guard Retired and his wife, Kitty, Judith Byrnes, Anne Byrnes-Bailey and her husband,
33 Darryl, and Barbara Robinson and her husband, Dean; now, therefore be it

34 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby

1 extends its deepest condolences to the Byrnes Family on the passing of Brigadier General
2 Michael T. Byrnes, United States Army, Retired; and be it further
3 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
4 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mrs. Marie Elena-Fasano and Family.

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