

2023 -- H 6300

=====
LC002812
=====

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 THE HONORABLE
MICHAEL A. HIGGINS**

Introduced By: Representatives Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Craven, McEntee, Edwards,
Tanzi, Ajello, Shallcross Smith, Bennett, and Spears

Date Introduced: April 20, 2023

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sadness that this House has learned of the passing of the
2 Honorable Michael A. Higgins, the beloved husband of Geraldine Higgins for nearly 50 years;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, Michael Higgins emigrated with his parents to Rhode Island from
5 Ballinamore, Leitrim, Ireland, when he was four years old, and grew up in Washington Park,
6 Providence. He attended St. Paul's Catholic School and Hope High School, and was very proud
7 of his work for nine years at Almacs Supermarket where he made many lifelong friends; and

8 WHEREAS, After attending Providence College, Judge Higgins became a lifelong
9 devoted Friar, and was very proud of the fact that his four children also attended Providence
10 College. He was also an avid fan of the Friars basketball team and a season ticket holder for more
11 than 50 years; and

12 WHEREAS, Judge Higgins attended Catholic University Law School, graduating with a
13 Juris Doctor degree in 1971. While attending law school, he worked as a Capitol Police Officer
14 and social worker. He became a highly respected lawyer who was a member of the Rhode Island
15 Bar Association, the American Bar Association and the American Trial Lawyers Association, and
16 built a successful law practice at the offices of Cobleigh and Higgins; and

17 WHEREAS, The Honorable Michael Higgins was elected to the Rhode Island House of
18 Representatives in 1972, and served his constituents and the people of Rhode Island with abiding
19 integrity and tireless devotion for nearly eight years. In recognition of his strong leadership skills

1 and work ethic, his colleagues elected him to serve as their Majority Leader in 1977; and

2 WHEREAS, In 1980, Judge Higgins was appointed to serve on the District Court where
3 he became known for his sharp wit, extensive legal knowledge, and for setting a brisk pace in his
4 court rooms. In recognition of his ability to quickly move a court calendar, he received the
5 nickname “machine gun Mike”, however, despite the quick pace with which he moved his court
6 proceedings, he always acted with the utmost fairness and compassion towards the people he
7 presided over on a daily basis. He also served as the Court Administrator in 2000, and served as
8 the Acting Chief Judge from 2008 until his retirement; and

9 WHEREAS, First and foremost in Judge Higgins life was always his family, which he
10 cherished. He loved travelling and made frequent trips with his family to New Hampshire, Florida
11 and South Carolina. He especially enjoyed spending time at the family town house in Breton
12 Woods, New Hampshire, where he taught his children how to ski and engage in many camp
13 activities and events; and

14 WHEREAS, Judge Higgins served on the Board of Directors of South County Hospital
15 and represented Rhode Island at the annual American Bar Association meetings for many years.
16 In his free time, he enjoyed playing golf, reading a good book, and summer day grilling; and

17 WHEREAS, In addition to his wife, Geraldine, Judge Higgins leaves behind his children,
18 Bethany Parker and her husband, Ted, Caitlin Pouliot and her husband, Adam, and Michael
19 Higgins, Jr., and his wife, Heather, as well as his beloved grandchildren, Teddy and Ryan Parker.
20 He is also survived by his brothers, Kevin and Barry Higgins, sister-in-law, Patricia McGowan
21 and her husband, Jim, and brother-in-law, Al Girard and his wife, Kia. He was predeceased by his
22 daughter, Tara, sister, Deirdre Horan, father-in-law, Albert Girard, mother-in-law, Madelyn
23 Girard and sister-in-law, Jeanne Girard Robinson. He also leaves behind many nieces, nephews,
24 cousins, friends, and his faithful canine companion, Tucker; now, therefore be it

25 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
26 expresses its deepest condolences on the passing of the Honorable Michael A. Higgins; and be it
27 further

28 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
29 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mrs. Geraldine Higgins and Family.

=====
LC002812
=====