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**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024**

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

**CONGRATULATING THE HONORABLE CHARLES KNOWLES ON HIS RETIREMENT  
AFTER MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS OF DEDICATED AND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE  
TO THE CITIZENS OF RHODE ISLAND**

Introduced By: Representatives Kennedy, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Place,  
Kazarian, Ackerman, Edwards, Craven, and Azzinaro

Date Introduced: January 04, 2024

Referred To: House read and passed

1           WHEREAS, The Honorable Charles Knowles was born in Providence. He graduated  
2 from St. Andrews High School in 1967, and the University of Rhode Island in 1971, where he  
3 was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army upon graduation. He  
4 proceeded to serve in the 173rd Airborne Brigade and the 101st Airborne Division during the  
5 Vietnam War, serving our nation with honor and distinction. In 1977, he received a law degree  
6 from the New England School of Law; and

7           WHEREAS, In 1974, Mr. Knowles joined the Rhode Island Army National Guard and  
8 graduated from the active-duty Special Forces course at Fort Bragg in 1975. His distinguished  
9 thirty-year military career included attaining the rank of full Colonel, graduating from the United  
10 States Army War College, serving as the Brigade Commander of Troop Command (Special  
11 Forces) and as the Commander of the 1021st Civil Affairs Group, and accomplishing 135 jumps  
12 as a paratrooper; and

13           WHEREAS, Charles Knowles has received numerous honors and commendations in  
14 recognition of his meritorious military career including being awarded the Legion of Merit, the  
15 Meritorious Service Medal with two clusters, the Rhode Island Star, the Master Parachutist Badge  
16 and the Pathfinder Badge; and

17           WHEREAS, Following his military career and graduation from law school, Charles  
18 Knowles embarked on a successful and thriving legal practice. A pillar of the community in  
19 Narragansett, Mr. Knowles' legal acumen was highly regarded within the community and his

1 legal services were sought after by many clients; and

2 WHEREAS, Mr. Knowles' life path eventually led to a career in public service that  
3 would span more than forty years. He served as the Secretary of the Narragansett Democratic  
4 Town Committee from 1982 to 1992, and on the Narragansett Zoning Board from 1982 to 1984,  
5 and again from 1986 to 1990; and

6 WHEREAS, In 1988, Charles Knowles was elected to serve in the Rhode Island House of  
7 Representatives, a seat he would hold for eight years from 1989 to 1997, representing citizens  
8 from Narragansett and South Kingstown. From his first days in the House, Mr. Knowles  
9 impressed his colleagues and the leadership with his vast knowledge of legal and constitutional  
10 issues, and his honesty, directness, preparedness, and forthrightness. Thanks to these attributes, he  
11 was chosen by the leadership to serve as the Chairman of the powerful House Judiciary  
12 Committee, a title he held for four years. Under his leadership and guidance, several significant  
13 “landmark” pieces of legislation were passed, all of which redounded to the great benefit of the  
14 people of Rhode Island, including Judicial Merit Selection, the “Anti-Revolving Door” law,  
15 Constitutional reorganization of the Rhode Island State Legislature, and pension reform; and

16 WHEREAS, For the last twenty-four years, Mr. Knowles has served as the Legal Counsel  
17 to the House Corporations Committee where his wisdom and wise advice has been highly valued  
18 by all members of the Committee, and his meticulous attention to detail, coordinating copious  
19 bundles of legislation, and working long hours with immense aptitude and ability has been  
20 indispensable. Mr. Knowles also served as the Legal Counsel for the Oversight and Veterans  
21 Affairs Committees and has always worked diligently and forthrightly to serve the members of  
22 the Rhode Island House, as well as the citizens of Rhode Island; and

23 WHEREAS, Charles Knowles has always been actively involved in many Rhode Island  
24 Civil and Charitable affairs, including serving as a member of the Rhode Island Bay Association,  
25 Save the Bay, Common Cause, the ACLU, the American Legion, the NRA, the Civil War  
26 Preservation Trust and a Founding sponsor of the National Museum of the United States Army.  
27 He also coached Little League, South Country Youth Soccer, Narragansett Recreational League  
28 Basketball and as Assistant Scoutmaster of Troop 2, as well as numerous other community  
29 groups and associations; and

30 WHEREAS, In his free time, Charles Knowles is a passionate Civil War historian and  
31 lecturer, enthusiastic gardener, avid Red Sox fan, and entertaining writer and correspondent; and

32 WHEREAS, Charles Knowles is the proud and beloved father to his children, Justin and  
33 Jennifer, and the devoted husband to his wife, the Honorable Sandra Knowles, a former State  
34 Representative from Foster; and

1           WHEREAS, Charles Knowles leaves not only very large shoes to fill, but will leave an  
2 indelible mark on the colleagues and legislators who have had the good fortune to work by his  
3 side. By virtue of his numerous years of devoted service to the Rhode Island General Assembly  
4 and the citizens of the Ocean State, he serves as an inspiration and a role model of conscientious  
5 civic service and is eminently worthy of our recognition and praise; now, therefore be it

6           RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby  
7 congratulates the Honorable Charles Knowles for his many years of honorable and distinguished  
8 service to our State as a State Representative and Legal Counsel for the Rhode Island House of  
9 Representatives, and for his thirty years of loyal and meritorious military service to our nation;  
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 Charles Knowles.

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