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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

SENATE RESOLUTION

EXTENDING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF EILEEN M. RAO

Introduced By: Senators Bissailon, McKenney, F. Lombardi, Britto, Acosta, Tikoian,  
Quezada, Ciccone, E Morgan, and Rogers

Date Introduced: June 04, 2024

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1           WHEREAS, It is with sadness that this Senate has learned of the passing of Eileen M.  
2 Rao, the beloved wife of the late Joseph Rao, Sr., and the devoted mother of Janice Valedofsky  
3 and her husband, David, Joseph Rao, Jr., and Colleen Rao-Sales and her husband, Mark; and

4           WHEREAS, A lifelong resident of the City of Providence, Mrs. Rao was the daughter of  
5 the late Anthony and Lillian Menese Santagata, and the sister of Everett Santagata; and

6           WHEREAS, On June 21, 1974, Mrs. Rao and her husband co-founded and were the  
7 owners of Mr. Lemon, a business they grew and perfected together over the next forty-nine years,  
8 earning her the nickname of “Mama Lemon”; and

9           WHEREAS, Mr. Lemon became a great success due in no small part because of the  
10 dedication of Eileen Rao who worked endlessly to perfect Mr. Lemon’s lemonade recipe. Over  
11 the years the business became a family venture as her children first worked alongside her and  
12 eventually took over, continuing the legacy and abiding by the same high standards of quality and  
13 pride in their product that she always insisted upon; and

14           WHEREAS, In addition to her adored lemonade store, Mrs. Rao was blessed with three  
15 grandchildren, David Valedofsky, Jr., Darren Valedofsky, and Eileen Locicero, and eight great-  
16 grandchildren, Joseph Valedofsky, Abigail Valedofsky, Keira Valedofsky, Paige Valedofsky,  
17 Noah Valedofsky, and Molly Valedofsky, Jack Locicero, and Josephine Locicero, all of whom  
18 were the loves of her life; and

19           WHEREAS, Eileen Rao was described by her children as irrepressible, strong as a lion,  
20 and yet a woman with a heart as gentle as a lamb, and she is dearly missed; now, therefore be it

1           RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby extends deepest  
2 sympathy and condolences on the passing of Eileen Rao; and be it further

3           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
4 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Janice Valedofsky, Joseph Rao, Jr., and Colleen  
5 Rao-Sales.

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