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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

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

**EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF THE HONORABLE JOSEPH
MICHAEL DOWNEY**

Introduced By: Representatives Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Corvese, Chippendale,
Speakman, Serpa, Donovan, Spears, Ajello, and Fellela

Date Introduced: January 15, 2025

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sadness that this House has learned of the passing of Joseph
2 Michael Downey, better known as Michael Downey to his family and many friends; and

3 WHEREAS, Joseph Michael Downey was born in Providence, the son of James Downey,
4 Jr., and Patricia Downey. He was the beloved husband of Claudette Downey for nearly fifty
5 years; and

6 WHEREAS, Michael Downey graduated from LaSalle Academy and later attained a
7 Master Plumbing License by completing a five-year apprenticeship program. Mr. Downey served
8 the State of Rhode Island with distinction as a plumber for thirty seven years, rising to the
9 position of Chief Plumbing Investigator, where he was known and highly respected for the
10 diligence with which he went about performing his duties and for his tireless work ethic; and

11 WHEREAS, Michael Downey is perhaps best known for his work as a labor leader and
12 for his unyielding advocacy on behalf of Rhode Island State workers. Mr. Downey served with
13 distinction as the President of union Local 528 where he represented the workers at the University
14 of Rhode Island. From 2005 to his passing, Mr. Downey served as the President of AFSCME
15 Council 94, where he fought tenaciously for the rights and well-being of more than ten thousand
16 State employees; and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Downey also served his local community in an elected position as a
18 member of the Charlestown Town Council, and as the Chairman of the Tax Assessment Review
19 Board. He also served on numerous boards and committees, including the University of Rhode

1 Island's Affirmative Action Committee, the Rhode Island AFL-CIO Executive Board, the Rhode
2 Island Retirement Board, the Rhode Island Institute of Labor Studies, and the Veterans Memorial
3 Museum in Woonsocket. Mr. Downey loved sports and was a passionate fan of the Red Sox,
4 Celtics and Patriots, and also enjoyed spending time on the Breachway, patronizing various
5 Charlestown Coffee shops, and served as an assistant in the St Mary's/St. James education
6 program; and

7 WHEREAS, In addition to his wife Claudette, Mr. Downey leaves behind his children,
8 Corey, Faith and Michael, his daughters-in-law Megan and Marissa, his son-in-law Manuel, and
9 his grandchildren, Grace, Camden, Mason, Lily, Connor, Brennan, Leonora, Warren, and Nolan
10 J. Michael; now, therefore be it

11 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
12 expresses its condolences to the Downey Family on the passing of Joseph Michael Downey; and
13 be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
15 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mrs. Claudette Downey.

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