

2025 -- H 5480

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

HOUSE RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF DR. JOSEPH J. BOX

Introduced By: Representatives Cruz, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Potter,
Corvese, Azzinaro, Morales, Stewart, and Voas

Date Introduced: February 12, 2025

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sadness that this House of Representatives of the State of
2 Rhode Island has learned of the passing of Dr. Joseph J. Box. He was the beloved husband of the
3 late Janice Drake Box; and

4 WHEREAS, Joseph J. Box was born in Providence to Maria and Luigi Box. Mr. Box was
5 raised in a close-knit and loving Italian-American family on River Avenue, surrounded by fig,
6 pear and chestnut trees and other vegetables in their gardens. As a young boy, Mr. Box loved
7 spending time with his mother picking blueberries, foraging for mushrooms, and canning
8 tomatoes; and

9 WHEREAS, Joseph Box was an industrious young boy who worked numerous jobs
10 growing up, starting at the tender age of six. Whether it was working at an “unauthorized”
11 newspaper stand in front of the Biltmore Hotel with his brother Al, to making jelly donuts in
12 Cranston, working for Adolf the Taylor or working as a “Bobbin Boy” at Lorraine Mills, where
13 he hauled, and re-tied broken threads on the looms for the women workers, there was hardly a
14 place in Rhode Island where Joe could not drive by and tell you an interesting story about his
15 youthful exploits. He also spent the summer of 1941 as a Jazz musician on Block Island; and

16 WHEREAS, An admittedly indifferent student in high school, Joe’s life changed by
17 chance when a friend invited him to visit the dental laboratory in which he worked making dental
18 molds. Thus began Joe’s career in dentistry, beginning as a dental assistant. However, before Joe
19 could advance within his chosen career, World War II would literally explode on the horizon; and

20 WHEREAS, During World War II, Joseph Box served our nation with distinction in both

1 the United States Navy and the United States Marines, serving as a Dental Technician. Joe
2 enjoyed serving in the military so much, after World War II, he joined the Rhode Island Air
3 National Guard, retiring with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel; and

4 WHEREAS, After World War II, thanks to the Veterans GI Bill, Joseph Box attained his
5 GED and attended Providence College, something he never imagined would be possible. Mr. Box
6 then proceeded to attend dental school in St. Louis, and then practice dentistry for 65 years,
7 where he was known and beloved for his family-friendly and kid-friendly approach to dentistry;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Shortly before attending dentistry school, Mr. Box met the love of his life,
10 the late Janice Drake, at a YWCA dance. They married shortly thereafter, and raised their four
11 children together in a wonderfully loving and nurturing home, and doted on their grandchildren
12 together until her passing; and

13 WHEREAS, Throughout his life, Joseph Box was always giving back in support of his
14 community. He served in numerous leadership positions within the Rhode Island Air National
15 Guard, the City of Pawtucket, in support of numerous national dental associations, including
16 serving as the Chief Examiner for the National Dental Association, and in support of the Sons of
17 Italy civic organization. Mr. Box, later in life, also returned to dentistry, working as a mobile
18 dentist at several nursing homes; and

19 WHEREAS, Joseph Box has received numerous awards and honors throughout his
20 distinguished career, including being inducted into the Pawtucket Hall of Fame, and being the
21 first recipient of the Rhode Island Dental Association's eponymous Dr. Box Everyday Leadership
22 Award, presented annually to a person who has demonstrated the highest level of ethics and
23 dedication to the improvement of the art and science of dentistry; and

24 WHEREAS, In his free time, Joe enjoyed travelling, especially to his beloved Italy,
25 listening to opera, writing and reciting poetry, and practicing yoga on a daily basis; and

26 WHEREAS, Joseph J. Box leaves behind his children, David Box, and his wife, Diana,
27 Sharon Holtkamp, Krista Box and her husband, Matthew Riley, and Suzy Box and her husband,
28 Harry Adler, and his five grandchildren, Tony, Lindsay, Alex, Nick and Will, and his great-
29 granddaughter Stella; now, therefore be it

30 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
31 expresses its deepest condolences to the Box Family on the passing of Joseph J. Box; and be it
32 further

1 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
2 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to David Box, Sharon Holtkamp, Krista Box and
3 Suzy Box.

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