

2025 -- H 6081

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING ST. PATRICK'S DAY AND HONORS IRELAND'S ROLE IN THE UNITED STATES WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Introduced By: Representatives Kennedy, McNamara, Dawson, Craven, Edwards, Shanley, Casey, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, and Chippendale

Date Introduced: March 13, 2025

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, On March 17th, during the annual celebration of the Feast of Saint Patrick,
2 the Patron Saint of Ireland, Irish Americans join with people of all ethnic origins who, for one
3 day, are considered honorary citizens of Ireland as they celebrate Saint Patrick and a love of all
4 things Irish; and

5 WHEREAS, Wielding the devotion of his faith like a great sword of righteousness, and
6 using the strength of his intellect and the power of his passions, Saint Patrick assimilated the
7 ancient pagan Irish myths into a Christian message, and in so doing, converted all of Ireland to
8 Christianity during his lifetime; and

9 WHEREAS, Irish immigrants to Rhode Island helped to form the cultural foundation of
10 our State, and Rhode Islanders of Irish lineage today proudly sing of their roots in Ballinamore
11 and Ballinasloe, in Ennistymon and Enniscorthy, in Cahirciveen and Castlebarr, and in
12 Skibbereen and Skerries; and

13 WHEREAS, The songs of Ireland are the tragic songs of love and the joyous songs of
14 battle: the nostalgic reveries of the sorrows and the glories that are the Emerald Isle; and the
15 lamentations of life's myriad travails and the odes to joy and the life eternal; and

16 WHEREAS, A century ago, in October of 1924, Ireland formally opened diplomatic
17 relations with the United States of America when Timothy Smiddy presented his credentials to
18 President Calvin Coolidge. Following the Irish people's long and painful struggle for
19 independence, the U.S. was one of the first nations to recognize the fledgling Irish state earlier

1 that year, and when Smiddy emerged from the White House, he had become Ireland's first
2 Ambassador to any country in the World; and

3 WHEREAS, While the year 1924 marked the beginning of formal diplomatic relations,
4 the deep Irish American connection actually dated back centuries. In April of 1775, at Lexington
5 and Concord, the American War of Independence had begun with "the shot heard round the
6 world" which ultimately inspired Ireland to also struggle to create their own destiny and be free.
7 A short month later, with a group of Irish fishermen capturing the HMS Margarettta, and shortly
8 thereafter, with the capture the two additional vessels sent to reclaim the original ship, the Irish
9 began their fight for liberty; and

10 WHEREAS, During those same tumultuous times, 176 Irish born men who came to be
11 known as the "Fighting Irish" as well as hundreds of Irish immigrants' children, were among the
12 New England militiamen who were defending Boston Harbor. In addition, dozens of Irish and
13 Irish American officers fought and died at the Battle of Bunker Hill; and

14 WHEREAS, Over the course of America's fight for independence, many Irish born men
15 and those of Irish decent played key roles in America's independence including, Colonel John
16 Stark, Major Andrew McClary, Captain Ebenezer Sullivan and his brothers, James and John, and
17 Commodore John Barry who became known as the "Father of the American Navy"; and

18 WHEREAS, Today, nearly one tenth of Americans identify as being of Irish ancestry.
19 Irish immigrants helped build the America we know today, not only during America's fight for
20 independence, but also in the physical infrastructure - the skyscrapers of Manhattan and the
21 transcontinental railroad - and also in the political construct that is America; and

22 WHEREAS, Irish people have made an enormous contribution to public debate and
23 politics in America, from their representation in local communities right up to the White House,
24 including more than twenty American Presidents with some Irish ancestry; and

25 WHEREAS, The influence of Irish Americans has also extended well beyond the Oval
26 Office and the Capitol Building, to every state within the Union, most evident by the significant
27 number of state legislators within the American Ireland State Legislators Caucus, which is open
28 to everyone of Irish Heritage and those who are supporters of Ireland; and

29 WHEREAS, Since Timothy Smiddy's momentous audience in the Oval Office more than
30 100 years ago, a further eighteen Irish Ambassadors have presented credentials to U.S.
31 Presidents. Over this time, Ireland's relations with the United States have evolved and Ireland has
32 transformed and today is at peace, economically prosperous, and culturally vibrant due in part to
33 the support of friends in the United States and the crucial role America played in brokering peace
34 in Northern Ireland - culminating in the 1998 Good Friday Agreement; and

1 WHEREAS, The US-Irish relationship is a shining example of how ancestral ties,
2 historical connections, cultural affinities, and shared values can create a foundation for enduring
3 partnership and mutual prosperity. Irish American state legislators across the United States are
4 playing a vitally important role in fostering this partnership and ensuring that it continues and
5 flourishes for another century to come; now, therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
7 celebrates St. Patrick's Day and honors Ireland's role in the United States War of Independence;
8 and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
10 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Chair of the American Irish State
11 Legislators Caucus, Senator Mark Daly, the 24th Chair of the Senate of Ireland and to the
12 National Co-Chairs, Assemblywoman Carol Murphy, New Jersey; Assemblyman Robin Vos,
13 Wisconsin; Representative Brian Patrick Kennedy, Rhode Island; Assemblyman James
14 Gallagher; California; Representative Fran Hurley, Illinois; Representative Killian Timoney,
15 Kentucky; Representative John Lawn, Massachusetts; Representative Maureen Terry, Maine;
16 Senator Ogden Driskill, Wyoming; Senator Beth Mizell, Louisiana; Delegate Roger Hanshaw,
17 West Virginia; and Representative Marcus Evans, Illinois.

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