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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING FUNDA FEST 28 AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RI BLACK
STORYTELLERS (RIBS) FROM JANUARY 13TH-25TH, 2026

Introduced By: Representatives Morales, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale,
Sanchez, Stewart, Hull, J. Lombardi, Biah, and Ajello
Date Introduced: January 15, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, RI Black Storytellers (RIBS) was founded in 1998, and is a nonprofit
2 organization whose mission is to promote “the awareness, appreciation, and application of Black
3 Storytelling in Rhode Island through performance, as well as through educational and cultural
4 experiences”; and

5 WHEREAS, Funda Fest is “the flagship of RIBS programming”, and over the years, has
6 reached over 120,000 people with international, national, regional, and local artists at various
7 career stages, representing the diversity of Black storytelling; and

8 WHEREAS, Funda is a South African Zulu word meaning “to learn” or “to teach”. Funda
9 Fest is a two-week celebration which includes seven statewide public performances in partnership
10 with local organizations in each city or town, and annually reaches a statewide audience of
11 thousands; and

12 WHEREAS, This year heralds the 28th celebration of Funda Fest, and provides a platform
13 for Black people to shape the narrative of their own history and promote awareness, appreciation,
14 and application of Black storytelling through an educational and cultural experience, with a place
15 and time to learn the history, values, and traditions that have often been non-existent in
16 mainstream literature; now, therefore be it

17 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
18 joins the thousands of Rhode Islanders in celebrating and supporting Funda Fest 28 from January
19 13th through the 25th, 2026. We moreover urge all Rhode Islanders to take this time to listen,

1 experience, and learn generational Black history, values and traditions through the power of
2 storytelling from the “keepers of the culture”; and be it further
3 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
4 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Rhode Island Black Storytellers (RIBS).

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