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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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

EXTENDING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF RUTH ANN DESMARAIS

Introduced By: Representatives Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Kazarian, Chippendale, Kennedy, Ajello, Tanzi, Shallcross Smith, Fellela, and Boylan

Date Introduced: February 05, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with sadness that this House has learned of the passing of Ruth
2 Desmarais, the beloved wife of the late Archie Desmarais, and the devoted mother of Susan
3 Thompson and her husband, Mark; and

4 WHEREAS, Ruth Desmarais was born in Fall River, Massachusetts, the daughter of the
5 late Manuel and Frances Rebello, and the sister of the late Lorraine Sousa Williams, Robert
6 Rebello and his partner, Janet Aurelio, Jean Carroll and her late husband, Timothy, and John
7 Rebello and his wife, Sharon. She also had a large and loving extended family including her
8 nephews, Justin and Jordan Rebello, and her niece and nephew, Cathi-Jo Finnerty and Walter
9 Sousa Jr, as well as many additional nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews; and

10 WHEREAS, Selfless and kind, Mrs. Desmarais' "unwavering commitment to her family"
11 created a warm and loving home, where she took great pleasure in hosting annual Christmas Eve
12 gatherings, and spoiling her beloved grandchildren, Rebecca, Raffaella, and Zachary Thompson,
13 and her little dog, Nala; and

14 WHEREAS, Guided by her faith, Mrs. Desmarais was a devout parishioner of St.
15 Margaret Church where she taught CCD, and served as a Eucharistic Minister. She also coached
16 Rumford Little League girls' softball teams. Ruth was a diehard New York Yankees fan and
17 rarely missed watching a game; and

18 WHEREAS, Ruth was a trusted, valued, hard-working, and beloved staff member of the
19 House of Representatives for 11 years. She served as executive assistant to Speaker Gordon Fox
20 and to House Finance Chairs. She also worked as a Legal Secretary at the Al DiFiore Law Office

1 for thirty-five years. Throughout her service at both the State House and as a Legal Secretary,
2 she "took great pride in being someone others relied on". A steadfast Democrat, Ruth's dedication
3 to public service and her party's principles was unwavering and reflected in all aspects of her
4 professional and personal life. She was a strong, loyal, smart, responsive, and dedicated
5 employee. Her coworkers appreciated her candor, toughness, and sense of humor. She had the
6 ability to be refreshingly blunt. Yet, she was extremely compassionate and had a heart of gold;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, The matriarch of her family, Ruth Desmarais was faith-filled, intelligent,
9 strong-willed, resilient, and truly beloved by all who knew her, and she is dearly missed; now,
10 therefore be it

11 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
12 extends deepest condolences and sympathy to the family and friends of Ruth Ann Desmarais; 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 Susan Thompson and Family.

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