

2026 -- H 8444

LC006347

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

HONORING LEANNE BARRETT FOR HER EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE TO RHODE ISLAND'S CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND WISHING HER CONTINUED SUCCESS IN HER NEW ROLE AT THE RHODE ISLAND ASSOCIATION FOR INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

Introduced By: Representatives Diaz, Shekarchi, Kazarian, Chippendale, Shallcross Smith, Slater, Kislak, Alzate, Messier, and Edwards

Date Introduced: April 14, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, The members of the House of Representatives hereby recognize and honor  
2 Leanne Barrett for her more than two decades of exceptional service, leadership, and advocacy on  
3 behalf of Rhode Island's youngest children and their families; and

4 WHEREAS, For twenty-one years at Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, Ms. Barrett has  
5 served with distinction as Director of Early Childhood Policy and Strategy, building an enduring  
6 legacy of thoughtful policy development, collaboration, and tireless advocacy; and

7 WHEREAS, Ms. Barrett has been a driving force behind the Right from the Start  
8 Campaign, coordinating a coalition of organizations dedicated to advancing state policies and  
9 budgets that support families with infants and young children; and

10 WHEREAS, Her longstanding commitment to public service is further exemplified by  
11 her membership on the General Assembly's Permanent Legislative Commission on Child Care  
12 from 2000 through 2026, where her insight and expertise have helped shape meaningful  
13 legislative progress; and

14 WHEREAS, Ms. Barrett coordinated the Rhode Island Early Learning Council for  
15 fourteen years, working successfully across multiple gubernatorial administrations to strengthen  
16 and align early childhood systems statewide; and

17 WHEREAS, Throughout her career, Ms. Barrett has played a central role in drafting and  
18 advancing landmark early childhood legislation and policy improvements, including expanding

1 access to and funding for the Child Care Assistance Program, establishing the Child Care for  
2 Child Care Educators program, and supporting the creation and success of the BrightStars quality  
3 rating system; and

4 WHEREAS, She has been instrumental in the establishment of the Rhode Island  
5 Prekindergarten Education Act, helping to create a nationally recognized prekindergarten  
6 program that meets the highest standards for quality and child development; and

7 WHEREAS, Ms. Barrett's advocacy has helped secure vital funding for Head Start and  
8 Early Head Start programs, strengthen the Early Intervention system, and protect and enhance  
9 Rhode Island's Temporary Caregivers Insurance program and paid sick and safe leave law,  
10 ensuring families can care for their children during critical times; and

11 WHEREAS, Her leadership also contributed to the establishment of the Rhode Island  
12 Family Home Visiting Act and to advancing policies that recognize and address infant and early  
13 childhood mental health, including the creation of a statewide task force and strategic plan; and

14 WHEREAS, Through her dedication, collaboration, and steady leadership, Ms. Barrett  
15 has improved systems of care and opportunity for countless Rhode Island families, leaving a  
16 lasting and meaningful impact on the State; and

17 WHEREAS, It is both fitting and proper that this House of Representatives recognizes  
18 Ms. Barrett's next professional chapter as she assumes the role of Executive Director of the  
19 Rhode Island Association for Infant Mental Health, where her expertise and passion will continue  
20 to benefit children and families; now, therefore be it

21 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives extends our warmest congratulations  
22 and best wishes to Leanne Barrett on her new role as Executive Director of the Rhode Island  
23 Association for Infant Mental Health, and wishes her continued success in all her future  
24 endeavors; and be it further.

25 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby  
26 honors Leanne Barrett for her remarkable accomplishments and contributions to early childhood  
27 policy and advocacy, and expresses our deepest gratitude for her years of dedicated service; and  
28 be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
30 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Leanne Barrett.

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