

2026 -- H 8493

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

COMMEMORATING APRIL 30, 2026, AS "NATIONAL THERAPY ANIMAL DAY" IN THE
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Handy, Chippendale, Fogarty,
Kennedy, Ajello, Phillips, Santucci, and Boylan

Date Introduced: April 30, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, National Therapy Animal Day was created to recognize the exceptional
2 dogs, cats, and other animals that bring comfort, joy, and healing to those in need; and

3 WHEREAS, Animal-assisted therapy is based on the unique bond that exists between
4 human beings and animals. Dogs and cats are most commonly used in pet therapy, however, fish,
5 guinea pigs, horses, and other animals are also used depending on the therapeutic goals of a
6 person's treatment plan; and

7 WHEREAS, There are numerous therapeutic benefits that animals can provide, including
8 improvement in self-image and sense of competence, nurturing a sense of responsibility,
9 expressing feelings and distress through the animal, and developing curiosity and motivation to
10 learn, not to mention the endless hours of fun, warmth, and love; and

11 WHEREAS, Many animals main goal is to love and please the humans in their lives,
12 often including total strangers. Animals frequently have the innate ability to detect emotions in
13 people from cues invisible to humans and many will instinctively comfort a person whom they
14 sense is in distress and in need of some extra attention; and

15 WHEREAS, Whether professionally supervised or the casual and spontaneous interaction
16 between loving animals and folks in need, animal therapy is a powerful tool for improving
17 treatment outcomes and enhancing quality of life for many individuals; and

18 WHEREAS, Promoting public awareness for animal therapy is an effective pathway
19 toward a friendlier, healthier and more peaceful world; now, therefore be it

1 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
2 commemorates "National Therapy Animal Day" and urges the Director of the Department of
3 Health and Human Services and all the citizens of Rhode Island to continue to appreciate,
4 promote, and advocate for the incomparably life-changing and life-sustaining benefits of the
5 human-animal bond; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
7 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Director of the Rhode Island Department of
8 Health and Human Services, Paws from the Heart Pet Therapy, and the Windwalker Humane
9 Coalition for Professional Pet Assisted Therapy.

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