

2026 -- H 8539

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CONGRATULATING THAWN SHERENTÉ HARRIS ON SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING
THE 2026 BOSTON MARATHON AND HONORING THE LEGACY OF HIS GREAT-
UNCLE, ELLISON "TARZAN" BROWN

Introduced By: Representatives Spears, Blazejewski, Kazarian, Chippendale, Donovan,
Speakman, Boylan, Carson, Cotter, and McEntee

Date Introduced: May 12, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Thawn Sherenté Harris of Charlestown, a proud member of the Narragansett
2 Indian Tribe, successfully completed the Boston Marathon, one of the world's most historic and
3 challenging long-distance races; and

4 WHEREAS, Thawn completed the 26.2-mile Boston Marathon course with an impressive
5 official finish time of 3 hours, 59 minutes, and 30 seconds, finishing in under four hours, and is
6 only the third member of the Narragansett Tribe to complete the race while achieving the second-
7 fastest recorded time among them; and

8 WHEREAS, This achievement was undertaken as both a personal milestone and a
9 ceremonial journey to honor his great-uncle, Ellison "Tarzan" Brown, and to commemorate the
10 90th anniversary of Tarzan Brown's first Boston Marathon victory; and

11 WHEREAS, Ellison "Tarzan" Brown rose to national prominence in the 1930s, winning
12 the Boston Marathon in 1936 and again in 1939, and competing in the 1936 Olympic Games,
13 while bringing recognition and pride to the Narragansett people; and

14 WHEREAS, Tarzan Brown's 1936 victory included his legendary passing of race
15 favorite Johnny Kelley on the hills of Newton, an iconic moment that gave rise to what is now
16 known as "Heartbreak Hill"; and

17 WHEREAS, In completing the Boston Marathon, Thawn symbolically followed in his
18 great-uncle's footsteps along that same historic stretch, retracing the site of one of Brown's most
19 celebrated achievements; and

1 WHEREAS, Thawn is among the first direct relatives of Tarzan Brown in generations to
2 run the Boston Marathon, further underscoring the significance of his accomplishment and its
3 connection to Rhode Island history, marking the first time in ninety years that a direct descendant
4 has undertaken this historic race; and

5 WHEREAS, A tribal storyteller, educator, and cultural leader within the Narragansett
6 community, Thawn Sherenté Harris approached the marathon as a ceremonial act reflecting a
7 deep commitment to heritage, perseverance, and representation, running “for the people” while
8 carrying the Narragansett flag over the finish line; and

9 WHEREAS, In a powerful tribute to his great-uncle, Thawn also crossed the finish line
10 barefoot, carrying his sneakers, in remembrance of Tarzan Brown’s first Boston Marathon in
11 1935 when he ran the final miles without shoes; and

12 WHEREAS, Despite recovering from an ACL injury and training for only three and a
13 half months, while also overcoming double lateral meniscus tears, Thawn demonstrated
14 extraordinary perseverance in preparing for and completing the marathon; and

15 WHEREAS, His preparation included training through the historic Blizzard of 2026,
16 which set a new record as the largest snowfall in Rhode Island history, and repeatedly running the
17 hills of Newton, including a final 21-mile training run during which he ascended Heartbreak Hill
18 three times in prayer and ceremony; and

19 WHEREAS, Thawn’s journey was supported by his family and friends, including his
20 wife, Eleanor Dove Harris, and their seven children, as well as by the Narragansett Indian Tribe,
21 the Town of Charlestown, the Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center, the Wakefield
22 Running Club, and many supporters from across Rhode Island; and

23 WHEREAS, His accomplishment serves as a significant tribute to his great-uncle’s
24 enduring legacy and as an inspiration to future generations to pursue excellence while honoring
25 their cultural identity and history, and stands as a testament to perseverance, heritage, and
26 Indigenous visibility; now, therefore be it

27 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
28 congratulates Thawn Sherenté Harris on successfully completing the Boston Marathon and
29 honors him for proudly continuing the legacy of his great-uncle, Ellison “Tarzan” Brown; and be
30 it further

31 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
32 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Thawn Sherenté Harris.

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