

2026 -- H 8551

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CONGRATULATING RIPIN ON 35 YEARS OF IMPROVING RHODE ISLANDERS' LIVES

Introduced By: Representatives Spears, Blazejewski, Kazarian, Chippendale, Potter,
Ajello, Fellela, Bennett, Santucci, and Diaz

Date Introduced: May 14, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, RIPIN is a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit organization that helps Rhode
2 Islanders navigate health care, special education, and healthy aging in order that they can achieve
3 their health, education, and socio-economic well-being goals; and

4 WHEREAS, RIPIN was founded in 1991 by a passionate group of parents of children
5 with special needs who came together to share information, find resources, and support one
6 another, creating a peer-to-peer model that remains at the heart of the organization's work today;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Over the past 35 years, RIPIN has grown into a statewide network of more
9 than 100 peer professionals, most of whom have personal experience caring for a loved one with
10 special healthcare or educational needs, allowing them to provide uniquely empathetic, practical
11 support to families; and

12 WHEREAS, A majority of the members of RIPIN's board of directors are always parents
13 of children with special needs from birth to age 26; and

14 WHEREAS, RIPIN empowers Rhode Islanders of all abilities, ages, and backgrounds by
15 offering one-on-one assistance, workshops, and learning opportunities that build the skills,
16 knowledge, and confidence needed to navigate complex systems of care; and

17 WHEREAS, RIPIN's health insurance call center has saved Rhode Islanders more than
18 \$10 million since 2018 by resolving coverage problems and preventing avoidable costs; and

19 WHEREAS, RIPIN plays a critical role in supporting parents and caregivers in special
20 education, helping families understand their rights, advocate for their children, and collaborate

1 effectively with schools in order that students with disabilities can learn, grow, and thrive; and

2 WHEREAS, RIPIN is Rhode Island’s federally designated Parent Training and
3 Information Center (PTIC) and Family-to-Family (F2F) Health Information Center, making
4 RIPIN a go-to resource for families raising children with special needs; and

5 WHEREAS, RIPIN also advances healthy aging by helping older adults stay healthy,
6 active, and independent in their homes, ensuring they get the care they need when and where they
7 need it; and

8 WHEREAS, Since 2017, RIPIN has recorded hundreds of thousands of interactions with
9 Rhode Islanders every year, including more than 115,000 client encounters in 2025, reflecting the
10 organization’s deep and growing impact across the state’s healthcare, education, aging, and
11 disability systems; and

12 WHEREAS, In its 35th anniversary year, RIPIN is celebrating countless stories of
13 empowerment and resilience from families, youth, adults with disabilities, and older adults whose
14 lives have been improved through peer support, advocacy, and connection to vital services; now,
15 therefore be it

16 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island recognizes
17 RIPIN as an indispensable partner in strengthening Rhode Island’s safety net, advancing equity,
18 and ensuring that all residents can access the supports they need to thrive; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives hereby congratulates RIPIN on the
20 occasion of its 35th anniversary and commends its board, leadership, staff, and peer professionals
21 for their outstanding service to the people of Rhode Island; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
23 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to RIPIN.

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