

2026 -- H 8618

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING AND ACKNOWLEDGING JUNE OF 2026 AS "PORTUGUESE
AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Solomon, Noret, Fellela, Lima, Donovan, Hull,
Blazejewski, Kazarian, Chippendale, and Read

Date Introduced: June 04, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Rhode Island takes immense pride in its cultural diversity and heritage, and
2 proudly recognizes the significant contributions of the Portuguese American community since
3 colonial times; and

4 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Day of Portugal advocates for honoring all Portuguese
5 Americans by declaring June as Portuguese American Heritage Month in the State of Rhode
6 Island; and

7 WHEREAS, Portuguese Americans constitute a substantial and vibrant segment of
8 Rhode Island's population, with strong communities in cities including Bristol, East Providence,
9 Cumberland, Pawtucket, Portsmouth, Tiverton, Warren, Cranston, West Warwick, Newport, and
10 Providence; and

11 WHEREAS, The contributions of Portuguese Americans to Rhode Island are celebrated
12 annually through cultural events such as the Rhode Island Day of Portugal Heritage Festival and
13 various church and club festivals, showcasing Portuguese culture, music, dance, food, and
14 traditions; and

15 WHEREAS, The Portuguese American community has played a pivotal role in Rhode
16 Island's educational, political, and social advancement, with many leaders and citizens of
17 Portuguese descent serving in public service roles; and

18 WHEREAS, The month of June holds significance, as Portugal's National Day on June
19 10th commemorates the legacy of Luís de Camões, Portugal's national poet, whose works have

1 left an indelible mark on world literature; and

2 WHEREAS, The Portuguese American community in Rhode Island has demonstrated
3 resilience and hard work, and has contributed significantly to various industries such as whaling,
4 fishing, textiles, and jewelry, thereby shaping the State's economic landscape; and

5 WHEREAS, The historic Our Lady of the Rosary Church in Providence, which was
6 founded in 1886 by Portuguese immigrants, stands as the oldest continuously active Portuguese
7 American church in the United States, and symbolizes the enduring legacy of Portuguese
8 immigration to Rhode Island; and

9 WHEREAS, The contributions of early Portuguese Jews, such as Jacob Rodrigues
10 Rivera, Aaron Lopez, and Isaac Touro, are commemorated by landmarks like the historic Touro
11 Synagogue in Newport, which symbolizes religious freedom and tolerance in the United States;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, The Portuguese Discovery Monument at Brenton Point celebrates Portugal's
14 legacy of nautical innovation, honoring Prince Henry's establishment of a nautical school in
15 Sagres Point in 1419 and the development of the Caravel, a vessel that revolutionized maritime
16 exploration; now, therefore be it

17 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
18 proclaims and acknowledges June of 2026 as "Portuguese American Heritage Month" in
19 recognition of the enduring contributions of Portuguese Americans to the State's cultural,
20 economic, and social fabric; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
22 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Governor Daniel McKee, the Prime Minister of
23 Portugal, the President of Portugal, the Vice-Consulate of Portugal in Providence, and the Rhode
24 Island Day of Portugal nonprofit organization.

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