

2026 -- H 8619

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING THE MONTH OF JUNE 2026 AS "PRIDE MONTH" IN THE STATE OF
RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Kazarian, Blazejewski, Kislak, Handy, Fogarty, Tanzi,
Ajello, McGaw, Cruz, and Stewart

Date Introduced: June 04, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Rhode Island celebrates LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender,
2 Queer, Intersex, Asexual +) people in June of 2026, by honoring the history, struggles, and
3 successes of LGBTQIA+ people and by supporting peace and prosperity for everyone; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1949, the Rhode Island General Assembly established the State
5 Commission for Human Rights with the understanding that "[t]he practice or policy of
6 discrimination against individuals...is a matter of state concern", and that "discrimination foments
7 public strife and unrest, threatens the rights and privileges of the inhabitants of the state, and
8 undermines the foundations of a free democratic state" R.I.G.L. Section 28-5-2; and

9 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights is one of the oldest state
10 agencies in the country that specializes in antidiscrimination law enforcement; and

11 WHEREAS, The Commission enforces all Rhode Island antidiscrimination laws in the
12 areas of employment, housing, public accommodations, credit and delivery of services; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1995 the Rhode Island General Assembly passed legislation which added
14 protections for sexual orientation to our antidiscrimination laws; and

15 WHEREAS, In 2001, Rhode Island became the second state in the nation to pass
16 legislation which added protections for gender identity to our antidiscrimination laws; and

17 WHEREAS, Rhode Island State statutes prohibit discrimination based on race, color, sex
18 (including pregnancy and sexual harassment), disability, ancestral origin, religion, age, sexual
19 orientation, and gender identity/expression; and

1 WHEREAS, Lesbian and gay Rhode Islanders organized their first PrideFest in 1976
2 with approximately 75 people in attendance. Called the "76ers", these individuals marched
3 through downtown Providence despite State and City leaders attempting to block the parade.
4 They sought to celebrate their diversity, and to highlight the contributions they had made to the
5 wider community; and

6 WHEREAS, On June 25, 1978, Gilbert Baker, an Army veteran from Kansas, designed
7 the rainbow flag as a symbol for the gay liberation movement, which flies during the annual
8 Rhode Island Pride Parade. Each color of the flag has a meaning: hot pink for sexuality, red for
9 life, orange for healing, yellow for the sun, green for nature, turquoise blue for art, indigo for
10 harmony, and violet for spirit; and

11 WHEREAS, On November 20, 1999, Gwendolyn Ann Smith, a well-known advocate for
12 trans rights, created the first Transgender Day of Remembrance, commemorating all the trans
13 people who were killed by anti-transgender violence and bigotry; and

14 WHEREAS, The Netherlands became the first country to recognize the freedom to marry
15 for LGBTQ+ people in 2001; Massachusetts affirmed the autonomy, dignity, and equality of
16 LGBTQ+ people when the state's highest court became the first to recognize the freedom to
17 marry for LGBTQ+ people in 2003; Rhode Island passed a law that went into effect on August 1,
18 2013 recognizing marriage equality; and in 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court ensured nationwide
19 marriage equality ruling all state bans on same-sex marriage unconstitutional, allowing gay and
20 lesbian couples to marry nationwide and requiring states to recognize a lawful same-sex marriage
21 performed in another state; and

22 WHEREAS, After dramatically boosting the attendance and community involvement in
23 PrideFest, in 2018, PrideFest led to Providence being listed as one of the "World's Best
24 Destinations for LGBT Pride Celebrations" by National Geographic; and

25 WHEREAS, Rhode Island will celebrate our LGBTQIA+ community on June 20, 2026
26 with the PrideFest Celebration and Illuminated Night Parade; now, therefore be it

27 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
28 celebrates June of 2026, as "Pride Month" and embraces the LGBTQIA+ community with
29 appreciation for their culture, creativity and contributions; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That this House will hereby continue to respect every Rhode Islander and
31 work to ensure equity and justice as a hallmark of Rhode Island legislation; and be it further

- 1 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
- 2 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Rhode Island Pride.

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