

2026 -- H 8628

=====
LC006455
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

HONORING AND THANKING SPEAKER K. JOSEPH SHEKARCHI FOR HIS
EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP AND DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE STATE OF RHODE
ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Blazejewski, Kazarian, Chippendale, Cotter, Hull,
Corvese, J. Lombardi, Fogarty, Shallcross Smith, and Ajello

Date Introduced: June 11, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, The Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi has distinguished himself through
2 strong leadership, tireless advocacy, and a deep dedication to serving the people of Rhode Island
3 throughout his tenure in the House of Representatives, including more than five years as Speaker
4 of the House, after first being elected by his colleagues in January 2021 and subsequently re-
5 elected in 2023 and 2025; and

6 WHEREAS, Speaker Shekarchi served as House Majority Leader from November 2016
7 through 2020, previously chaired the House Labor Committee, and has proudly represented
8 District 23 in the City of Warwick since first being elected to the House of Representatives in
9 November of 2012; and

10 WHEREAS, Addressing Rhode Island's housing crisis was a cornerstone of Speaker
11 Shekarchi's legislative agenda, as he led passage of more than 60 housing-related laws and
12 transformative initiatives that created the State's first dedicated funding stream for affordable
13 housing, established Rhode Island's first Department of Housing led by a cabinet-level secretary,
14 prohibited housing discrimination against recipients of rental assistance, and secured historic
15 investments to combat homelessness and expand affordable housing opportunities, including
16 voter approval of a \$120 million housing bond in 2024; and

17 WHEREAS, Speaker Shekarchi was a tireless advocate for accessible and equitable
18 healthcare, championing legislation and budget initiatives that strengthened Rhode Island's
19 healthcare system through increased support for primary care providers, hospitals, and nursing

1 homes, while also advancing landmark protections for reproductive freedom, healthcare privacy,
2 and access to abortion care, including passage of the Health Care Provider Shield Act, the
3 Equality in Abortion Coverage Act, and the Reproductive Privacy Act; and

4 WHEREAS, Under Speaker Shekarchi's leadership, the General Assembly enacted
5 significant economic and tax reforms, including elimination of the tangible tax for most small
6 businesses, acceleration of the car tax phase-out, investments in life sciences and wet lab
7 incubators, and reforms to Rhode Island's banking tax structure designed to protect jobs and
8 maintain competitiveness; and

9 WHEREAS, Speaker Shekarchi supported economic development initiatives that created
10 thousands of private-sector jobs and helped secure a \$250 million economic development
11 agreement protecting more than 1,100 Rhode Island jobs and one of the state's largest revenue
12 sources; and

13 WHEREAS, A strong advocate for working families, Speaker Shekarchi championed
14 landmark pay equity legislation prohibiting wage discrimination while also supporting legislation
15 raising wages and establishing safe staffing levels in nursing homes; and

16 WHEREAS, Speaker Shekarchi also strengthened educational opportunity by helping
17 make the Rhode Island Promise program permanent and supporting expanded affordable higher
18 education opportunities for Rhode Island students and families; and

19 WHEREAS, He further demonstrated his commitment to Rhode Island's future through
20 leadership on renewable energy initiatives and passage of the landmark Act on Climate, one of
21 the most consequential environmental measures enacted in decades; and

22 WHEREAS, Beyond his legislative service, Speaker Shekarchi graduated from Mount St.
23 Charles Academy and Suffolk University, where he earned both his undergraduate and law
24 degrees, and has enjoyed a successful legal career spanning more than thirty years, including
25 service as Warwick Solicitor and longtime legal counsel to the Warwick Housing Authority; and

26 WHEREAS, A lifelong resident of Warwick, Speaker Shekarchi announced his
27 resignation during his third term in order to seek nomination to the Rhode Island Supreme Court,
28 concluding a historic chapter of public service marked by compassion, innovation, and dedication
29 to the people of Rhode Island; now, therefore be it

30 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
31 honors and thanks Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi for his outstanding leadership, dedicated service,
32 and countless contributions to the people of Rhode Island, and furthermore extends its deepest
33 gratitude and best wishes for continued success in all his future endeavors; 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 The Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi.

=====
LC006455
=====