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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF JOHN EARL GRAY

Introduced By: Senators Murray, and Thompson

Date Introduced: January 12, 2026

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sadness that this Senate has learned of the passing of John  
2 Early Gray of Woonsocket. He was the beloved husband of the late Bessie Gray; and

3 WHEREAS, John Gray was born in Newberry, South Carolina, the son of the late  
4 Thomas and Mary Eva Gray. Mr. Gray was a United States Army veteran who served our nation  
5 with honor and distinction during the Korean War; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Gray was a former employee of the Woonsocket School Department  
7 where he worked in the Maintenance Department and later as a painter for a combined total of  
8 fifteen years. Mr. Gray was also a former member of the St. James Baptist Church where he was  
9 ordained into the Deacons Ministry; and

10 WHEREAS, On December 30, 1984, Mr. Gray had the high honor of being elected to  
11 serve as the President of the NAACP Branch of Woonsocket. He was re-elected to a second term  
12 in 1986, and during his term in office he made a positive difference in the lives of countless  
13 people in Woonsocket and across the State; and

14 WHEREAS, Mr. Gray joined the Masonic Order in 1968, later becoming a Master  
15 Mason. In March of 1969, Mr. Gray was elevated to the 32nd Degree in Mount Sinai Consistory  
16 #12. In 1987, he joined the Order of the Eastern Star (PHA); and

17 WHEREAS, John Gray is survived by his children, Eugene Dandy, Thomas Gray and his  
18 wife, Onelia, Christopher Gray and his wife, Carla, Pamela Williams and her husband, Lee,  
19 Allison Gray, Wendy Gray Burke, and her husband, Willie, and Vanessa Ward and her husband,  
20 Eddie. He also leaves his niece, whom he raised as a daughter, Dawn Mecca Dandy-Jones. Mr.

1     Gray leaves behind his brother, Raymond Gray, and his wife, Carolyn, Ten grandchildren, Cara,  
2     Lania, Desmond, Nakya, Jordan, Raven, Kiara, Tyheem, Brooklyn, and Isaaih, and seven great-  
3     grandchildren, Zariah, Khari, Kalel, D’Mari, Pharoah, Aziel, and Zyiel. Mr. Gray was  
4     predeceased by his grandchildren, Tiffany and Markeith; now, therefore be it

5             RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby expresses its  
6     condolences on the passing of John Earl Gray; and be it further

7             RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
8     transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Gray Family.

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