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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING APRIL 9, 2026, TO BE "RHODE ISLAND HOME VISITING DAY"

Introduced By: Senators Valverde, Patalano, Ujifusa, Britto, Famiglietti, Dimitri, Mack,
Vargas, Appollonio, and LaMountain

Date Introduced: April 09, 2026

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, Home visiting programs provide voluntary, evidence-based services that
2 help parents meet the unique needs of their children, promote healthy development, strengthen
3 family relationships, reduce the risk of abuse and neglect, and connect families with needed
4 resources; and

5 WHEREAS, Rhode Island's Family Home Visiting system includes First Connections,
6 Healthy Families America, and Parents as Teachers, which together provide coordinated, home-
7 based supports to pregnant people and families with young children; and

8 WHEREAS, Many parents begin the lifelong responsibility of raising a child feeling
9 unprepared for the challenges ahead, and children have a healthier start when parents have the
10 support, knowledge, and skills needed to nurture their development; and

11 WHEREAS, Trained professionals deliver these home visiting services in ways that
12 respect each family's culture, beliefs, and traditions while connecting them to health care, social
13 services, and community supports; and

14 WHEREAS, For more than four (4) decades, Rhode Island's First Connections program,
15 overseen by the Rhode Island Department of Health, has provided free, voluntary, statewide
16 home visiting services to expectant parents and families with newborns, infants, and toddlers,
17 reaching approximately thirty-five percent (35%) of families with new babies; and

18 WHEREAS, In 2010, Rhode Island expanded home visiting services through the
19 implementation of nationally recognized, evidence-based models including Healthy Families
20 America and Parents as Teachers, which connect pregnant and parenting families with trained

1 professionals who provide guidance and support during the early stages of raising a child; and

2 WHEREAS, Since 2021, the number of families in Rhode Island receiving family home
3 visiting services has declined by thirty-two percent (32%) due to staffing shortages and funding
4 challenges; and

5 WHEREAS, Since 2021, the state’s only Nurse-Family Partnership program, six (6)
6 Parents as Teachers programs, and two (2) Healthy Families programs have closed; and

7 WHEREAS, Rhode Island has not allocated sufficient state resources to fully leverage
8 available federal home visiting funding; and

9 WHEREAS, The State of Rhode Island encourages individuals and organizations across
10 the state to recognize and support home visiting programs as an important resource for the health
11 and well-being of children and families; now, therefore be it

12 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby proclaims April 9,
13 2026, to be “Rhode Island Home Visiting Day” in the State of Rhode Island and encourages
14 residents to recognize the vital role that home visiting programs play in supporting families and
15 promoting healthy child development; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
17 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Jerome Larkin, MD, Director of the Rhode
18 Island Department of Health, and Kim Merolla-Brito, Director of the Rhode Island Department of
19 Human Services.

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