

2026 -- S 3351

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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SENATE RESOLUTION

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

Introduced By: Senator Melissa A. Murray

Date Introduced: June 04, 2026

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

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

30           RESOLVED, That this Senate 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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