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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012

SENATE RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING OUR DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF ROBERT J.
MCKENNA

Introduced By: Senators Paiva Weed, Sosnowski, Tassoni, Lanzi, and Gallo

Date Introduced: January 19, 2012

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, It is with great sadness that this Senate has learned of the passing of The
2 Honorable Robert J. McKenna, a former State Representative, State Senator, and Mayor of the
3 City of Newport; and

4 WHEREAS, The son of the late James C. and Margaret (Gorman) McKenna, Bob was
5 the beloved husband of Mary Jean McKenna, the loving father of Kelly, Margaret Enkler and her
6 husband, Peter, Mark McKenna, Raymond McKenna and his wife, Diane, Elizabeth McKenna,
7 Paul McKenna and his wife, Nancy, and Patricia MacDonald and her husband, Kevin. Robert was
8 the proud grandfather of Erika and Tristan Enkler, Sean McKenna, Julia, Ryan, Kaitlin, and
9 Joshua McKenna, Emily and Phoebe MacDonald, and Kyle and Brandan McKenna.

10 WHEREAS, After attending parochial schools in Providence and graduating from Brown
11 University, Bob entered the U.S. Army and served his country with honor and integrity,
12 becoming a Russian Linguist at the Army Language School in Monterey, California; and

13 WHEREAS, Bob continued his service by entering politics and working tirelessly for the
14 people of Newport and the State of Rhode Island. He served as a State Representative from 1969
15 to 1973 and as a State Senator from 1974 to 1985, then as the Mayor of Newport from 1988 to
16 1994; and

17 WHEREAS, Bob demonstrated a profound concern for education that went well beyond
18 his duties as a professor of politics, director of community relations, and assistant to the President
19 at Salve Regina. Bob supported education and collaboration among all colleges and universities

1 in the state as a member of the Rhode Island Board of Governors, as a member and chair of the
2 Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority and the Rhode Island Student Loan
3 Authority, as the President of the Rhode Island Independent Higher Education Association, and
4 chair of the New England Board of Higher Education; and

5 WHEREAS, An indefatigable civic booster who worked hard to better his community,
6 Bob belonged to many local and statewide organizations, most notably the Right to Life
7 Committee, the Ancient Order of the Hibernians, the Irish Heritage Association, the Newport
8 Democratic City Committee, and many more; and

9 WHEREAS, Even though we are diminished by this loss and mourn the passing of Bob,
10 so must we celebrate the spirit, generosity, and courage with which he lived every day of his life;
11 now, therefore be it

12 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
13 hereby expresses our deepest condolences on the passing of The Honorable Robert J. McKenna;
14 and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and he hereby is authorized and directed to
16 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mary Jean McKenna.

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