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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2013

SENATE RESOLUTION

THANKING ALL INVOLVED IN RESTORING THE PORTRAIT OF GOVERNOR
WILLIAM SPRAGUE

Introduced By: Senators Hodgson, Algieri, Paiva Weed, P Fogarty, and Ottiano

Date Introduced: May 14, 2013

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, Rhode Island's 27th Governor, William Sprague, left an indelible impression
2 on our history, and his official portrait, measuring twelve feet by five feet, reflects his expansive
3 presence in the Ocean State. The restoration of his portrait testifies to the respect that the citizens
4 of Rhode Island still feel for him and represents the very best of statewide collaboration; and

5 WHEREAS, A native of Cranston and, later, a resident of Narragansett, Governor
6 Sprague emerged from a family of considerable industrial and political prominence. In 1860, at
7 age 30, he became the "Boy Governor" of Rhode Island on a Unionist-Republican-Fusion ticket
8 and, shortly thereafter, fought in the First Battle of Bull Run during the Civil War. Governor
9 Sprague assumed the office of U.S. Senator in 1863, where he served until 1875. In his later
10 years, following a tumultuous series of events in his personal life, he found solace on his beloved
11 estate, Canonchet, and served as the first Town Council President in Narragansett; and

12 WHEREAS, The years were not kind to Governor Sprague's official portrait, which hung
13 in the Rhode Island State House. Exposure to temperature fluctuations, humidity, and light
14 resulted in fading and cracks. These imperfections caught the attention of former URI Professor
15 Richard Vangermeersch as he conducted research on Rhode Island's famous Civil War Governor;
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Professor Vangermeersch is determination to restore Governor Sprague's
18 portrait caused him to reach out to and enlist critical support from a dedicated cross-section of art
19 lovers and Narragansett residents. Working together, a restoration committee brilliantly raised

1 more than \$16,000 to fund extensive refurbishing and purchase a new frame for the portrait; and

2 WHEREAS, Thanks to the tremendous efforts of Professor Vangermeersch, Jim Crothers
3 of the South County Museum, former Narragansett Town Manager Grady Miller, John Miller, the
4 Providence Art Club, the Williamstown Art Restoration Center, the URI community, and many
5 other generous individuals and organizations, Governor Sprague once again looks down proudly
6 from his steed to greet visitors to the State House; now, therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
8 hereby expresses its profound gratitude to all of the individuals and organizations who made
9 possible the restoration of the portrait of Governor William Sprague. We appreciate all of the
10 work that has ensured that Governor Sprague's extraordinary contributions to the Ocean State are
11 reflected in his magnificent countenance; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
13 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mr. Richard Vangermeersch.

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