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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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SENATE RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING ITS DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF NELSON MANDELA

Introduced By: Senators Metts, Pichardo, Paiva Weed, Ruggerio, and Goodwin

Date Introduced: January 21, 2014

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1           WHEREAS, The world and humanity lost one of its greatest citizens when Nelson  
2 Mandela passed away. Fortunately, he left a legacy we all can cherish and pass on to our children,  
3 a legacy of standing up for, and sacrificing for, freedom, liberty and equality, and standing  
4 against hatred, racial prejudice, violence and war;

5           WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela was born on July 18, 1918 as Rolihlahla Mandela, to  
6 Nonqaphi and Nkosi Mphakanyiswa Gadla Mandela in Transkei, South Africa. Nelson Mandela  
7 was also affectionately known as Madiba, a term used for respected elders, and a fitting name for  
8 a man called the "Father of the South African Nation;" and

9           WHEREAS, Nelson Mandela courageously refused to accept and tolerate racial injustice  
10 and South Africa's immoral system of Apartheid. For his courageous stand against injustice,  
11 Nelson Mandela was sent to prison for life and spent 27 years in prison, spending 17 of those  
12 years on Robben Island and only being permitted one visitor a year, for only a 30 minute stay.  
13 Additionally, he was confined to a small cell, was sentenced to hard labor and was harshly  
14 mistreated by prison officials;

15           WHEREAS, Throughout his prison stay, Mandela remained resolute and refused offers to  
16 renounce his righteous struggle against the government of South Africa in exchange for his  
17 freedom, and became widely viewed throughout the world as a martyr and the leader against the  
18 Apartheid government; and

19           WHEREAS, On February 11, 1990, under growing international pressure, and national  
20 campaign efforts, Nelson Mandela was released from prison after more than 27 years of

1 incarceration. Upon his release, Mandela resumed a top position in the African National Congress  
2 and led the party in negotiations that resulted in South Africa's first multiracial election; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1994, following the first free election in South Africa, Nelson Mandela  
4 was elected on May 9 and inaugurated on May 10, as President of the Democratic Republic of  
5 South Africa under a Government of National Unity; and

6 WHEREAS, As president, Mandela led the transition from minority rule and apartheid to  
7 a multicultural, multiracial democracy, and played a critical role in fostering national  
8 reconciliation, as he urged all South African citizens to forgive past injustices and join together to  
9 build a flourishing, free society where all are treated equally regardless of skin color. His decision  
10 to step down after one term showed his commitment to democratic principles for elected national  
11 leaders in new and emerging democracies around the globe; and

12 WHEREAS, For his sacrifice and tireless efforts to peacefully terminate the apartheid  
13 regime in South Africa, Nelson Mandela, along with Frederik de Klerk, was awarded the Nobel  
14 Peace Prize in 1993. Mandela had also received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2002 from  
15 President George W. Bush, and the Philadelphia Liberty Medal in 1993 from President Bill  
16 Clinton; now, therefore be it

17 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
18 hereby expresses its deepest sympathies on the passing of Nelson Mandela and expresses our  
19 admiration and appreciation of a great man who sacrificed much on behalf of his fellow man and  
20 represented principles we all cherish such as freedom, equality, and ending racial injustice; and be  
21 it further

22 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to send  
23 a duly certified copy of this resolution to South African President Jacob Zuma.

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