

2016 -- S 2845

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

SENATE RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING MARCH 25, 2016 AS THE 195TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK
INDEPENDENCE DAY

Introduced By: Senators Raptakis, Paiva Weed, Algiere, Gallo, and Nesselbush

Date Introduced: March 29, 2016

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, On March 25, 1821, the Feast Day of the Annunciation, the Greek nation
2 reclaimed its ancient heritage as the "Cradle of Democracy" by overthrowing the yoke of
3 oppression which had enslaved its people since the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Conquered by
4 the Ottoman Turks in the 15th century, Greece waged a successful War of Independence (1821-
5 1829) and re-instituted a democratic form of government; and

6 WHEREAS, The people of the United States generously offered humanitarian assistance
7 to the Greek people during their struggle for independence; and

8 WHEREAS, The price for Greece in holding onto our common values in their region was
9 high, as hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed in Greece during World War II; and

10 WHEREAS, Greece is only one of three nations in the world, beyond the former British
11 Empire, that has been allied with the United States in every major international conflict in the last
12 100 years; and

13 WHEREAS, The Government and people of Greece actively participate in peacekeeping
14 and peace-building operations conducted by international organizations, including the United
15 Nations, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, and the Organization for
16 Security and Co-operation in Europe, and have more recently provided critical support to the
17 operation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Libya; and

18 WHEREAS, Greece, located in a region where Christianity meets Islam and Judaism,
19 maintains excellent relations with Muslim nations and Israel and demonstrates religious

1 tolerance; and

2 WHEREAS, Greece and the United States are at the forefront of the effort for freedom,
3 democracy, peace, stability, and human rights; and

4 WHEREAS, Those and similar ideals have forged a close bond between Greece and the
5 United States and their peoples; and

6 WHEREAS, A record 1.2 million people requested asylum with the European Union in
7 2015. Greece faced the brunt of this exodus, receiving more than 650,000 migrants in 2015, with
8 asylum seekers arriving at the rate of 8,000 a day. The nation of Greece and its people have
9 generously assisted these applicants and have shown great compassion for them as they seek out a
10 better life for themselves, one filled with personal freedom and economic security. We all owe a
11 debt of gratitude to the Greek people; and

12 WHEREAS, March 25, 2016, Greek Independence Day, marks the 195th anniversary of
13 the beginning of the revolution that freed the Greek people from the Ottoman Empire and
14 celebrates the aspirations for democracy and tolerance that the peoples of Greece and the United
15 States share; and

16 WHEREAS, The Government of Greece has taken important steps in recent years to
17 further cross-cultural understanding, rapprochement, and cooperation in various fields with
18 Turkey, and has also improved its relations with other countries in the region, including Israel,
19 thus enhancing the stability of the wider region; and

20 WHEREAS, It is proper and desirable for the United States to celebrate this anniversary
21 with the Greek people and to reaffirm the democratic principles from which these two great
22 nations were born; now, therefore be it

23 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
24 hereby celebrates March 25, 2016, as the 195th Anniversary of Greek Independence, reaffirms
25 Rhode Island's abiding commitment to the magnificent principles of democracy and religious
26 freedom, and urges Turkey to respect the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical
27 Patriarchate; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
29 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church of
30 Cranston, the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church of Pawtucket, the St. Spyridon Greek
31 Orthodox Church of Newport, the members of the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation, and
32 Archbishop Demetrios of the Greek Archdiocese of America.

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