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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES TO THE BURBELO FAMILY ON THE PASSING OF  
GREGORY M. BURBELO, MD.

Introduced By: Representatives Azzinaro, Solomon, Price, Edwards, and Chippendale

Date Introduced: February 01, 2017

Referred To: House read and passed

1           WHEREAS, Gregory M. Burbelo, MD., passed away at his home on January 23, 2017, at  
2 the age of 93. He was a beloved father, grandfather, physician and friend; and

3           WHEREAS, Mr. Burbelo was born in the village of Sokal, Ukraine, in 1923. He  
4 graduated from high school in the midst of the Second World War and joined his four siblings in  
5 fleeing the communist invasion of his homeland in 1942. They eventually moved to Bavaria and  
6 that's where Dr. Burbelo learned to speak English as he cleaned pots and pans for the United  
7 States military; and

8           WHEREAS, Dr. Burbelo eventually graduated from Erlangen Medical School and  
9 shortly thereafter, he immigrated to the United States with his wife, Elsa, who predeceased him in  
10 1974, to complete his internal medical residency. Dr. Burbelo moved to Block Island where he  
11 had to walk throughout the Island to treat his patients. He charged three dollars for an office visit  
12 and five dollars for a house call; and

13           WHEREAS, Several years after he began his practice on Block Island, Dr. Burbelo  
14 moved to Westerly where he practiced medicine on Elm Street and later, Crestview Drive. For  
15 close to forty years, he practiced medicine in Westerly and was a beloved and trusted figure in the  
16 community. He, along with his wife Lilian, who predeceased him in 1990, enjoyed playing  
17 tennis, traveling, tending to their garden, and the daily joys of family life; and

18           WHEREAS, Dr. Burbelo spoke five languages and was a larger-than-life figure who was  
19 a magnificent storyteller capable of spellbinding an audience with his narratives. He never forgot

1 his roots and was a devoted philanthropist to his homeland, the Ukraine. He wrote passionate  
2 newspaper articles about the atrocities committed by various Soviet and Russian regimes. One  
3 summer during his retirement, Dr. Burbelo, while recovering from a cardiac bypass, volunteered  
4 his medical services not far from the Chernobyl nuclear power disaster area. He later said that this  
5 was "one of the most rewarding facets of his life"; and

6 WHEREAS, Dr. Burbelo is survived by his six children, Andrew Burbelo, Mark Burbelo,  
7 Peter Burbelo, Thaissa Klimavicz, Gregory Burbelo, and Daria Burbelo, and eleven  
8 grandchildren; now, therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and  
10 Providence Plantations hereby expresses its condolences to the Burbelo Family on the passing of  
11 Gregory M. Burbelo, MD.; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
13 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Andrew Burbelo, Mark Burbelo, Peter Burbelo,  
14 Thaissa Klimavicz, Gregory Burbelo, and Daria Burbelo.

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