

2017 -- H 5463

LC001502

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N

COMMEMORATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHARTER OF PROVIDENCE COLLEGE

Introduced By: Representatives Mattiello, Shekarchi, Shanley, Fogarty, and Amore

Date Introduced: February 14, 2017

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, The bold vision of the Right Rev. Matthew Harkins, D.D., Bishop of
2 Providence, to build a Catholic college in the diocese began in 1915, with a series of meetings
3 between the Bishop and Father Meagher in Providence, and eventually resulted in a petition to the
4 Dominican Master General "...to grant permission to the Fathers of the Province of St. Joseph to
5 undertake the burden of a college of higher learning in our episcopal city"; and

6 WHEREAS, Included with the petition was Bishop Harkins' offer of an eleven acre tract
7 of land situated within ten minutes of the civic center of Providence and scholarships representing
8 \$10,000 in capital. On October 11, 1915, the Chapter voted to accept the Bishop's offer, however,
9 unfortunate world events delayed the institution of Providence College until January 29, 1916,
10 when Father Meagher and Bishop Harkins finally received permission to erect the college; and

11 WHEREAS, On February 14, 1917, Rhode Island Governor Robert Livingston Beekman
12 signed the Act to Incorporate Providence College into law. On February 24, 1917, Pope Benedict
13 XV's papal permission was granted, and on February 28, Master General Theissling gave his
14 formal permission to the papal document; and

15 WHEREAS, On March 10, 1917, the first Providence College Corporation meeting was
16 held at the Bishop's House and by May 23, 1918, ground was broken for the College's first
17 building – Harkins Hall. On September 18, 1919, with seventy-one students and nine Dominican
18 faculty, Providence College opened its doors; and

19 WHEREAS, Bishop Harkins' dream was legally and canonically founded in February of

1 1917, thus making the beginning of the fall semester of the 2016-17 academic year, the 100th
2 anniversary of the founding of Providence College; and,

3 WHEREAS, Providence College is a Catholic, Liberal Arts College and is the only
4 college or university in the United States that is administered by the Dominican Friars. It is
5 currently comprised of an undergraduate enrollment of approximately 3,900 students, and offers
6 degrees in forty-nine academic majors; and

7 WHEREAS, Milestones both big and small have marked Providence College's first
8 century. Through obstacles raised by World War I, the Great Depression and plummeting
9 enrollment caused by World War II, the College has persevered and adapted. In the fall of 1971,
10 approval for Providence College's undergraduate day school to admit women students was
11 received, and in 1948, the College joined the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).
12 March of 1961, marked Providence College's first National Invitational Tournament men's
13 basketball team win, but to the delight of generations of students and alumni, many more titles
14 have followed in the ensuing years; and

15 WHEREAS, With strong leadership, academic excellence, and a community built on
16 faith, since 1997, Providence College has consistently been ranked among the top five regional
17 universities in the North according to U.S. News & World Reports' "America's Best Colleges";
18 and

19 WHEREAS, In the words of former Senator John O. Pastore, "Providence College has
20 wrought a social and intellectual revolution in the State of Rhode Island"; now, therefore be it

21 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and
22 Providence Plantations hereby celebrates the 100th Anniversary of the founding of Providence
23 College. We moreover wish the faculty, staff, alumni and students of Providence College many
24 more years of community enrichment and continued educational and spiritual success; and be it
25 further

26 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
27 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Rev. Brian Shanley, O.P., President of
28 Providence College.

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