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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

SENATE RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING AND CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF PROVIDENCE
COLLEGE ON FEBRUARY 14, 2017

Introduced By: Senators Paiva Weed, Ruggerio, McCaffrey, Doyle, and Lombardi

Date Introduced: February 14, 2017

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, The Right Reverend Matthew D. Harkins, D.D., Bishop of Providence, in
2 the hope of founding a Catholic college in the city, first petitioned the Dominican Order to
3 establish a college in Providence in 1910 and, on November 24, 1910, the Provincial Council of
4 the Dominican Province of St. Joseph, which includes Rhode Island, approved that request; and

5 WHEREAS, Father Matthew L. Haegen, O.P., the Dominican Provincial of the Province
6 of St. Joseph, wrote to Father Hyacinthe Cormier, O.P., the Master of the Dominican Order, on
7 January 7, 1911, to report the Provincial Council's acceptance of the Bishop's offer to found a
8 college, asking that this endeavor be postponed for a few years until the Province had enough
9 priests and professors to handle the task; and

10 WHEREAS, Bishop Harkins, acting on the advice of the new Provincial, Father James
11 Raymond Meagher, O.P., wrote a formal invitation attached to a letter to Father Meagher, dated
12 October 9, 1915, a communication which is considered the classic document of the origin of
13 Providence College. This communication included maps showing the exact location of eleven
14 acres of land for the college and a promise from the Bishop of \$10,000 in scholarships for the
15 college; and

16 WHEREAS, The Dominican Intermediate Chapter, at their meeting in Washington, D.C.,
17 on October 11, 1915, voted to accept the Bishop's offer of the land and scholarships; and

18 WHEREAS, World War I delayed the founding of the college due to the November 8,
19 1915, sinking of the ship which had left Naples, Italy, and was headed for New York City, and

1 which was carrying the stamped, formal approval from the Master of the Order to move forward
2 in establishing the college; and

3 WHEREAS, Father Meagher informed Bishop Harkins on January 29, 1916, that the
4 Province had permission to start a college in Providence; and

5 WHEREAS, On January 18, 1917, Providence State Representative John I. Devlin
6 introduced a bill of petition in the Rhode Island General Assembly, and a revised bill passed the
7 House of Representatives unanimously on February 2nd, followed by approval from the State
8 Senate on February 6th; and

9 WHEREAS, R. Livingston Beeckman, then Governor of Rhode Island, signed the bill
10 into law on February 14, 1917, making Providence College an official corporation in the eyes of
11 the State of Rhode Island with a charter granted by the State; now, therefore be it

12 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
13 hereby congratulates Providence College and its President, Reverend Brian J. Shanley, O.P., on
14 the occasion of the college's Centennial anniversary and wishes them continued success over the
15 next century; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
17 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Father Shanley, O.P., President of Providence
18 College.

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