

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

SENATE RESOLUTION

CONGRATULATING THE HONORABLE ROBERT W. GEMMA ON HIS RETIREMENT
AFTER THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF DEVOTED AND DISTINGUISHED SERVICE TO THE
CITIZENS OF RHODE ISLAND AND THE RHODE ISLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Introduced By: Senators Lombardi, Algiere, Felag, Lynch Prata, and Lombardo

Date Introduced: March 02, 2017

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, The Honorable Robert W. Gemma was born in Providence, Rhode Island,
2 on January 31, 1958, the son of Gennaro "Jerry" Gemma and Joan Gemma. He graduated from
3 LaSalle Academy and Rhode Island College, and was a light-weight wrestler in high school; and

4 WHEREAS, Robert Gemma was elected in 1980 to represent the citizens of the West
5 End of Providence in the Rhode Island General Assembly and served with honor and integrity
6 from 1981 to 1983. He was a member of the House Committee on Special Legislation, the Joint
7 Committee on Accounts and Claims, and was a member of the Providence Preservation Society;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Robert Gemma has worked tirelessly for the Rhode Island State
10 Government Intern Program, serving as its Director for approximately thirty years. During his
11 tenure, he has given thousands of Rhode Island college students, and Rhode Island residents
12 attending non-state schools, the chance to gain college credits and valuable career and
13 professional experience working for numerous Rhode Island state government entities. More
14 importantly, his passion for helping these students, and abiding concern for their futures was a
15 quality that always impressed all observers of the intern program, including many grateful
16 parents. He also went beyond his job responsibilities on many occasions when he and his family
17 hosted many international students who took part in the program. One visit to his office to see his
18 amazing collection of college pennants and college caps immediately gave one an understanding
19 of just how much the intern program, and helping his student participants, meant to Robert

1 Gemma; and

2 WHEREAS, Robert Gemma will also be fondly remembered for his effervescent
3 personality and his snazzy sartorial style. His cheerful and friendly personality had the effect of
4 immediately putting nervous students at ease, and he was usually a sight to remember wearing
5 fancy suits and suspenders, often with an old-fashioned tobacco pipe in his mouth. His most
6 important quality though, was his devotion to duty and desire to help people. He worked
7 countless hours, including some weekends, doing everything humanly possible to meet the needs
8 of his interns. He would take the time to get to know them and their goals and would scour state
9 government and talk to numerous program directors seeking intern positions and duties that
10 would give these students a proper and fast start on their career aspirations. The number of
11 grateful people that Robert Gemma helped and became friends with is countless; and

12 WHEREAS, Robert Gemma is a devoted father to his children, Laura and Paul, and a
13 doting grandfather to his grandson, Joshua. He is also a passionate sports fan and an enthusiastic
14 supporter of the Boston Red Sox and the New England Patriots. For relaxation in his spare time,
15 he enjoys fishing. His legacy of exemplary and meritorious public service is one that will be long-
16 remembered by all who knew him and took part in the Rhode Island State Government Intern
17 Program under his direction; now, therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
19 hereby congratulates Robert W. Gemma on his retirement after thirty-five years of dedicated and
20 distinguished service to the citizens of Rhode Island and the Rhode Island General Assembly. We
21 wish him a most happy retirement and continued success in all his future endeavors; and be it
22 further

23 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
24 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Honorable Robert W. Gemma.

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