

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

SENATE RESOLUTION

HONORING LEINNI AND LISBETH VALDEZ FOR OVERCOMING DIFFICULT  
CIRCUMSTANCES TO EXCEL IN ACADEMICS AND ATHLETICS

Introduced By: Senators Goldin, Metts, Felag, Miller, and Lombardi

Date Introduced: June 06, 2017

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, Twin sisters Leinni and Lisbeth Valdez have overcome numerous obstacles  
2 and tragedies to blaze a path of excellence and achievement in their lives. They have not allowed  
3 family misfortune and unfair circumstances to stop them from excelling in life; and

4 WHEREAS, Leinni and Lisbeth Valdez were born in Puerto Rico and moved to the  
5 Dominican Republic and then Florida, by the age of nine. During their young lives, they attended  
6 ten different schools. When they arrived in Florida, they spoke no English and despite earning  
7 "A" grades in class, had to be held back. Instead of giving up or making excuses, they became  
8 more determined to succeed. In the words of Lisbeth, "I was so embarrassed.....I ignored the  
9 kids who teased us. Even though it was hard to accept the fact that I was held back, I see that it  
10 was worth it. They made the right decision because I learned to challenge myself and, since that  
11 moment, I haven't stopped challenging myself"; and

12 WHEREAS, Shortly thereafter, the twins had to face more tragedy when their mother  
13 was diagnosed with breast cancer. Additionally, their father had left the family and for six  
14 months, they lived in a homeless shelter with their younger sister. Despite these hurdles, the twins  
15 made no excuses. They attended school every day and excelled both in the classroom and in  
16 athletics; and

17 WHEREAS, Through hard work and sheer determination, Leinni and Lisbeth developed  
18 into star middle distance runners, earning numerous All-State honors. Hope High School Head  
19 Track Coach Thom Spann said of these young women, "In my thirty-four years at Hope High

1 School, they are the top ladies I've ever coached"; and

2 WHEREAS, Leinni and Lisbeth also poured their abundant determination into their  
3 studies. In the summers, they took special chemistry classes at Central High School and were  
4 once seen biking to class down Cranston Street in the pouring rain. Recently, while still in high  
5 school, they enrolled in two college classes at the Community College of Rhode Island and Roger  
6 William University, and earned 4.0 Grade Point Averages. Lisbeth has been named class  
7 valedictorian while her sister Leinni finished third in her senior class; and

8 WHEREAS, Leinni and Lisbeth have applied to twenty-three colleges and have been  
9 accepted by approximately twelve of them, including receiving \$57,000 in scholarship money  
10 from Brandeis University. Leinni and Lisbeth have served as an inspirational force for countless  
11 people. Their grace and humble countenance combined with their resolve and tenacity will surely  
12 lead to big achievements in the future; now, therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby honors Leinni and  
14 Lisbeth Valdez for overcoming difficult circumstances to excel in academics and athletics and we  
15 wish them further success in college and all future endeavors; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
17 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Leinni Valdez and Lisbeth Valdez.

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