

2018 -- H 8160

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2018

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

EXTENDING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF RONALD A. WOLK

Introduced By: Representatives Shekarchi, Mattiello, McNamara, Vella-Wilkinson, and Solomon

Date Introduced: May 03, 2018

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with utmost sadness that this House has learned of the passing of
2 Ronald A Wolk, a champion of school reform and the founder of the national magazine
3 Education Week; and

4 WHEREAS, Ronald Wolk was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the son of the late
5 Alfred and Anna Wolk, and the brother of Carol Westphal. He is survived by Mimi McConnell,
6 and their children, Suzanne Wolk, Lauren Wolk and her husband, Richard Hall, and Cally Wolk
7 and wife, Denise. He was also the beloved grandfather of Ryland and Cameron Hall, Ashley
8 Wolk, and the late Dylan Wolk, and was the uncle of many nieces and nephews; and

9 WHEREAS, From humble beginnings, Mr. Wolk worked tending graves, shoveling coal
10 and setting pins in a local bowling alley during his youth. While in his senior year of High
11 School, one of his teachers encouraged him to apply to college, thus setting him on the path to
12 become a life-long learner and a consummate advocate for education; and

13 WHEREAS, Upon attaining his Bachelor's degree in Journalism from Westminster
14 College, and a Master's degree in Journalism at Syracuse University, Mr. Wolk worked as a
15 reporter and associate editor of the Johns Hopkins University Alumni Magazine, and
16 subsequently as a special assistant to the president of Johns Hopkins. In 1968, he became an
17 assistant on President Johnson's National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, In 1969, Mr. Wolk moved to Rhode Island to serve as the Vice President for
20 university relations at Brown University, and in 1978, moved to Washington, D.C., to become

1 president of Editorial Projects in Education; and

2 WHEREAS, In 1981, Mr. Wolk launched Education Week, which immediately earned its
3 reputation by breaking a national education story on the Reagan administration's plan to
4 effectively dismantle the country's newly-formed Cabinet-level Education Department. Over the
5 next 16 years, the newspaper became the leading institution in education journalism; and

6 WHEREAS, In the 1960s, Mr. Wolk helped found The Chronicle of Higher Education. In
7 1997, he retired and returned to Rhode Island, where he remained active in school reform, helping
8 to establish the Rhode Island Business Roundtable and serving on its executive committee until
9 2004. In addition, he was an adjunct faculty member and a member of the advisory committee of
10 the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University, as well as serving on numerous
11 national education organization boards; and

12 WHEREAS, One of Mr. Wolk's proudest achievements was his work with the Big
13 Picture Company, which created an alternative high school in Providence called the Met School.
14 Illuminating her father's legacy, his daughter stated, "His belief was you had to engage kids and
15 then they would become life-long learners"; now, therefore be it

16 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and
17 Providence Plantations hereby extends deepest condolences on the passing of Ronald A. Wolk.
18 He will forever be remembered for the strides he made in the educational experience of our
19 nation's youth; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
21 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mimi McConnell and Family.

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