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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

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SENATE RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF THE HONORABLE JOHN SIDNEY  
MCCAIN III

Introduced By: Senators Algiere, Ruggiero, McCaffrey, and Goodwin

Date Introduced: January 02, 2019

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1           WHEREAS, Our nation lost one of its most respected statesman when United States  
2 Senator John Sidney McCain III, a true war hero, passed away on August 25, 2018. Senator  
3 McCain was a rarity in American politics in that he was someone who was admired, respected  
4 and trusted by people of all political persuasions and philosophies. His passing is a grievous loss  
5 for our nation; and

6           WHEREAS, The Honorable John McCain was born on August 29, 1936, in the Panama  
7 Canal Zone to United States Naval Officer John S. McCain Jr., and Roberta McCain. John  
8 McCain attended approximately twenty schools in his childhood as his family followed his father  
9 across the globe to numerous naval postings; and

10           WHEREAS, John McCain entered the United States Naval Academy in 1954, following  
11 in the path of his father and grandfather, both of whom graduated from Annapolis and became  
12 four-star Admirals. At Annapolis, John McCain was well-regarded by his classmates for his  
13 friendly demeanor and strong leadership abilities. He was a lightweight boxer at the Academy  
14 and often protected students who were the targets of bullying; and

15           WHEREAS, After graduating in 1958, John McCain was commissioned as an ensign and  
16 commenced naval aviator training at Pensacola, Florida. He completed flight school and was  
17 assigned to A-1 Skyraider squadrons, serving aboard aircraft carriers in the Caribbean and  
18 Mediterranean Seas; and

19           WHEREAS, Officer McCain would soon request combat duty, and in 1967, was assigned

1 to the USS Forrestal aircraft carrier where he flew an A-4 Skyhawk over North Vietnam in  
2 Operation Rolling Thunder. On October 26, 1967, then Lieutenant Commander McCain was shot  
3 down near Hanoi while on his 23rd mission. He ejected from his aircraft and almost drowned  
4 when he parachuted into True Bach Lake fracturing both arms and a leg. Soon thereafter, he was  
5 pulled to shore by some North Vietnamese people while other North Vietnamese people crushed  
6 his shoulder with a rifle and bayoneted him. Subsequent to this horrid experience, Officer  
7 McCain was sent to the notorious Hoa Lao Prison, sardonically nicknamed the "Hanoi Hilton"  
8 where he was refused treatment for a long period of time for his wounds and was beaten and  
9 tortured for information; and

10 WHEREAS, Officer McCain endured more than five years as a prisoner in North  
11 Vietnam. At one point the North Vietnamese, after learning that his father was the commander of  
12 all United States forces in Vietnam, offered to release him for their own propaganda purposes. He  
13 refused to be released because the Military Code of Conduct required that prisoners of war be  
14 released in the order of days of confinement with those serving the longest periods of time being  
15 released first. As a result of his refusal, he was once again subjected to brutal torture. He and his  
16 fellow POW's were eventually released in early 1973, but by then his injuries left him  
17 permanently incapable of raising his arms above his head; and

18 WHEREAS, Upon returning home, John McCain resumed his naval career and endured  
19 many surgeries to fix his broken body. In 1981, he retired from the United States Navy with the  
20 rank of Captain and was the recipient of many Navy awards and commendations; and

21 WHEREAS. In 1982, Senator McCain began his distinguished political career when he  
22 was elected to serve in the United States House of Representatives from Arizona, a position he  
23 held until 1988 when he was elected to serve in the United States Senate. As a United States  
24 Senator, he served as a member of the United States Senate Committee on Armed Services,  
25 serving as its Chairman from 2015 to 2018. From 1989 to 2018, Senator McCain was arguably  
26 the most respected voice on military affairs. He also vigorously supported campaign finance  
27 reform, opposed pork barrel spending and passionately spoke out against the use of torture in all  
28 circumstances; and

29 WHEREAS, Senator McCain first ran for President in 2000, and in 2008, he succeeded in  
30 attaining the GOP nomination, before falling to President Barack Obama in the election. Even  
31 though he lost that election, he always retained the admiration and respect of the American people  
32 for his faithful and heroic service to our nation. Not surprisingly, when Senator McCain was  
33 diagnosed with terminal brain cancer in 2017, he fought the disease with the vigor and grace all  
34 had come to expect from him. He finally succumbed to the disease on August 25, 2018,

1 engendering much grief but also deep appreciation for all he had done for our nation. John  
2 McCain's death is a grievous loss but hopefully the example he set will serve as a guidepost for  
3 all future military leaders, political leaders, and, most importantly, youngsters throughout our  
4 nation; now, therefore be it

5           RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
6 hereby expresses its deepest condolences to Mrs. Cindy McCain and the entire McCain Family on  
7 the passing of the Honorable John Sidney McCain III; and be it further

8           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
9 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mrs. Cindy McCain and Family.

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