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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

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A N A C T

RELATING TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS - SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGES

Introduced By: Senators McCaffrey, Lynch Prata, and Goodwin

Date Introduced: February 13, 2019

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 15-3-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 15-3 entitled "Solemnization  
2 of Marriages" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3           **15-3-5. Officials empowered to join persons in marriage.**

4           Every ordained clergy or elder in good standing; every justice of the supreme court,  
5 superior court, family court, workers' compensation court, district court or traffic tribunal; the  
6 clerk of the supreme court; every clerk, administrative clerk, or general chief clerk of a superior  
7 court, family court, district court, or traffic tribunal; magistrates, special or general magistrates of  
8 the superior court, family court, traffic tribunal or district court; administrative clerks of the  
9 district court; administrators of the workers' compensation court; every former justice or judge  
10 and former administrator of these courts; every former chief clerk of the district court; every  
11 former clerk, administrative clerk, or general chief clerk of a superior court; the secretary of the  
12 senate; elected clerks of the general assembly; any former secretary of the senate; any former  
13 elected clerk of the general assembly who retires after July 1, 2007; judges of the United States  
14 appointed pursuant to Article III of the United States Constitution; bankruptcy judges appointed  
15 pursuant to Article I of the United States Constitution; and United States magistrate judges  
16 appointed pursuant to federal law, may join persons in marriage in any city or town in this state;  
17 and every justice and every former justice of the municipal courts of the cities and towns in this  
18 state and of the police court of the town of Johnston and the administrator of the Johnston  
19 municipal court, while he or she is serving as an administrator, and every probate judge and every

1 former probate judge may join persons in marriage in any city or town in this state, and wardens  
2 of the town of New Shoreham may join persons in marriage in New Shoreham. In addition to the  
3 foregoing, the governor may designate any person to solemnize a particular marriage on a  
4 particular date and in a particular city or town, and may for cause at any time revoke such  
5 designation; provided, however, that no felon shall be permitted to solemnize a particular  
6 marriage until completion of such felon's sentence, served or suspended, and while on parole or  
7 probation regardless of a nolo contendere plea. In the case of persons so designated by the  
8 governor, the secretary of state shall promulgate rules and regulations as may be necessary to  
9 implement and carry out the provisions of this section and upon payment to the office of the  
10 secretary of state the sum of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150), shall issue to said person a  
11 certificate of such designation. Such certificate shall expire upon either the completion of such  
12 solemnization or the day following the particular date set forth in said certificate, whichever shall  
13 occur first. The fees collected under this section shall be deposited into the general fund.

14 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS - SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGES

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1           This act would allow the governor to designate any person to solemnize a marriage  
2 within the state of Rhode Island on a particular day and within a particular city or town. Said  
3 authorization would expire upon completion of the marriage or the following day of the  
4 scheduled marriage, whichever occurs first. People who are under a sentence or while on parole  
5 or probation for any felony would be ineligible to solemnize a marriage until said sentence is  
6 completed. A fee in the amount of one hundred fifty dollars (\$150) would be a prerequisite and  
7 would be payable to the secretary of state.

8           This act would take effect upon passage.

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