

2020 -- H 7602

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CONGRATULATING JENNIFER PAOLANTONIO ON BEING A 2019-2020 RECIPIENT OF
THE MILKEN EDUCATOR AWARD

Introduced By: Representatives Hawkins, Mattiello, Shekarchi, Chippendale, and
Ruggiero

Date Introduced: February 13, 2020

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, The Milken Educator Award, established in 1985 and first awarded in 1987,
2 is an initiative of the Milken Family Foundation that honors highly successful teachers and
3 provides each of the honorees with a \$25,000 unrestricted cash grant. Teacher magazine has
4 proclaimed the Milken Educator Award to be the “Oscars of Teaching”; and

5 WHEREAS, The award is given at “surprise ceremonies” in which the recipient is
6 “ambushed” at school and publicly honored with the award. Approximately thirty to forty
7 teachers receive the award annually and since 1987, more than 2,600 teachers have been honored;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, In recognition of her devotion to the teaching profession and her immense
10 success in educating children with diverse learning needs, Jennifer Paolantonio, a Special
11 Education teacher at Ponaganset High School has been named a 2019-2020 Milken Educator
12 Award winner; and

13 WHEREAS, Ms. Paolantonio earned her Bachelor's degree in Special Education from
14 Rhode Island College and is currently pursuing her Master's degree in Literacy from Providence
15 College; and

16 WHEREAS, As a champion for inclusion, Ms. Paolantonio has instilled an attitude of
17 acceptance and support for the integration of special education students into all the school's
18 educational settings as well as its social aspects and events, thereby opening the minds and future
19 potential for all the school's students; and

1 WHEREAS, Ms. Paolantonio's creativity in building an inclusive school atmosphere
2 begins each year with the school's assembly, where all the school's student wear "I Choose to
3 Include" t-shirts. In addition, she welcomes her colleagues into her classroom to learn how to
4 modify their curriculum and activities to be more inclusive. She is also very active in the Rhode
5 Island Special Olympics, traveling to various events with students, and has helped to organize
6 myriad schoolwide and community events; and

7 WHEREAS, Jennifer Paolantonio's inclusive and all-encompassing approach to
8 education imparts a crucial contribution not only to the well-being and success of her students,
9 but also to the entire school population. Her efforts have had a positive impact on her students'
10 education and have certainly qualified her as one of the "best of the best" in the country; now,
11 therefore be it

12 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and
13 Providence Plantations hereby congratulates Jennifer Paolantonio on being a 2019-2020 recipient
14 of the Milken Educator Award. We moreover thank her for her devotion to the betterment of all
15 students and extend our best wishes for her continued success; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
17 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Ms. Jennifer Paolantonio.

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