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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

HOUSE RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING DEEPEST SYMPATHY ON THE PASSING OF VIRGINIA COATES
CHAFEE, FORMER FIRST LADY OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Mattiello, Shekarchi, and Kennedy

Date Introduced: June 17, 2020

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with profound sadness that this House has learned of the passing of
2 Virginia Coates Chafee, the beloved wife of the Honorable John H. Chafee, former Rhode Island
3 Governor and United States Senator; and

4 WHEREAS, Mrs. Chafee was the daughter of Jane and W. Shelby Coates, Sr. She was
5 born at the family farm in Dublin, New Hampshire, and summered there for much of her youth.
6 She grew up in the village of Bayville on the north shore of Long Island, New York, and was a
7 graduate from Finch College in Manhattan. From her earliest years, Mrs. Chafee was immersed in
8 the cultural arts, and carried a deep and abiding pleasure for artistic and enlightening pursuits
9 throughout her lifetime; and

10 WHEREAS, A few years after her marriage in 1950, Mrs. Chafee and her husband settled
11 in Warwick where they built a home along Greene River. Equipped with a barn, numerous farm
12 animals and a large organic garden, their home was a perfect and blessed environment to raise
13 their six children, Zechariah Chafee, the Honorable Lincoln Chafee, former Governor of the State
14 of Rhode Island and United States Senator, John Chafee, Georgia Chafee Nassikas, Quentin
15 Chafee, and the late Tribbie Chafee; and

16 WHEREAS, In addition to making a wonderful and welcoming home and hosting
17 memorable homecooked dinners and small parties for her family and friends, Mrs. Chafee's
18 boundless nurturing nature extended to environmental causes, and inspired her husband to
19 preserve and protect the environment and open spaces, most notably the 336 acres of woodland

1 along the Potomac River, which became Burling Park; and

2 WHEREAS, Virginia Chafee was an utterly devoted wife, and the kind of mother,
3 grandmother, and great grandmother that every child deserves. She was a loyal and truly caring
4 friend, who left an indelible mark on the lives of those she knew and loved and she will be deeply
5 missed and always remembered; now, therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and
7 Providence Plantations hereby expresses its heartfelt condolences on the passing of Virginia
8 Coates Chafee; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
10 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Zechariah Chafee, the Honorable Lincoln
11 Chafee, John Chafee, Georgia Chafee Nassikas, and Quentin Chafee.

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