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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

SENATE RESOLUTION

CONGRATULATING WARWICK BEACON PUBLISHER AND EDITOR JOHN HOWELL
FOR HIS 50 YEARS IN LOCAL JOURNALISM

Introduced By: Senators McCaffrey, Lynch Prata, McKenney, Lombardo, and Gallo

Date Introduced: January 30, 2020

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, There was a brief interlude in the chronicle of John Howell's career when he
2 wanted to be a politician. To the good fortune of all Rhode Islanders, he chose instead to
3 document the historic escapades and events of our great state; and

4 WHEREAS, Mr. Howell graduated from American University in Washington, D.C. with
5 a degree in political science. After a brief stint volunteering and working with various political
6 candidates, he sought employment in the public relations field, only to discover that experience in
7 journalism was a necessary prerequisite; and

8 WHEREAS, Being in the right place at the right time led Mr. Howell to his first job as a
9 reporter for the *Port Chester Daily Item* in Connecticut. After two years of invaluable experience,
10 he joined the Air National Guard and was assigned to a unit based in White Plains, New York, as
11 the country's involvement in the Vietnam War began to intensify; and

12 WHEREAS, While still working for the *Daily Item*, Mr. Howell issued dispatches from
13 Vietnam and was subsequently activated for the mission by his base commander, who had hoped
14 to highlight the installation's work in order to prevent the base's closure. Eventually, his stories
15 for the paper were syndicated through the Gannett chain; and

16 WHEREAS, Mr. Howell's work at the *Daily Item* afforded him the experience and
17 credentials necessary to land a job as editor of the Manchester, Connecticut, bureau for the
18 *Hartford Times*, which in turn resulted in the opportunity to take a job with the *East Providence*
19 *Post* where he met his future business partner, Anthony Ritacco; and

1 WHEREAS, In 1969, Mr. Howell and Mr. Ritacco bought the *Beacon* and produced their
2 first *Warwick Beacon* edition on December 5, 1969; and

3 WHEREAS, Through the next five decades of local and world events, blizzards, murders,
4 weddings, and political comings and goings, the *Beacon* has reported the news, informed the
5 public, and been active watchdogs for open meetings infringements and public records issues; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Howell has also been notably and admirably involved with community
7 issues and state and local organizations. He served as President of the Rhode Island Press
8 Association, has been an advocate for the journalism program at the University of Rhode Island
9 and the Academic Decathlon, and has been an active supporter with the organization Mentor
10 Rhode Island and with efforts to preserve Rocky Point, to name but a few of his many altruistic
11 endeavors; and

12 WHEREAS, The accolades and praise for Mr. Howell's dedication to our State come
13 from every facet of life. He has been described as a "real newshound," a "highly accomplished
14 reporter and media executive," the "epitome of a dedicated community leader," an "inspiration
15 with his dedication to his craft," and an honorable man with a wonderful sense of humor; now,
16 therefore be it

17 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
18 hereby congratulates and honors Warwick Beacon Publisher and Editor John Howell, and thanks
19 him on behalf of all Rhode Islanders for 50 years of eloquent and informative journalism. We
20 moreover wish him the very best health and continued success; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
22 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mr. John Howell.

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