

2021 -- H 5043

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N

**HONORING AND THANKING MAYOR JAMES DIOSSA FOR HIS DEDICATED SERVICE
TO THE PEOPLE OF CENTRAL FALLS AND THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

Introduced By: Representatives Giraldo, Shekarchi, Alzate, Tobon, Barros, Filippi,
Vella-Wilkinson, Fellela, C Lima, and Speakman

Date Introduced: January 21, 2021

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, In 2013, James Diossa became the first Latino and youngest Mayor in the
2 City of Central Falls and at the time, the State. The son of immigrant textile mill workers from
3 Colombia, he was born and raised in Central Falls, and attended Becker College in
4 Massachusetts, where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice; and

5 WHEREAS, Shortly after graduation, he became concerned with so many of his
6 contemporaries leaving the City he loved. Inspired by Barack Obama's campaign for President, he
7 formed a grassroots campaign consisting of friends and family to run for a seat on the Central
8 Falls City Council representing the 4th Ward, and despite having very limited resources and no
9 prior political experience, he challenged the local political machine and won the election by
10 seventeen votes. He was sworn in as a member of the Central Falls City Council in January of
11 2010; and

12 WHEREAS, With the energy of youth and a determination to make a positive change for
13 the people of the City, then-Councilor Diossa assiduously engaged his constituency in an all-out
14 effort to make government more accessible for the City's working-class. He successfully
15 advocated to keep the City's only public library and post office open, and when the City's
16 reputation came under increased negative attack in the media, he called upon State and Federal
17 leaders to visit with the hard working families in his amazing City; and

18 WHEREAS, In 2012, Central Falls was pummeled with both fiscal and political
19 difficulties. Stepping up to the challenge, then-Councilor James Diossa ran for Mayor, winning

1 decisively. He was sworn in as Mayor in January of 2013, re-elected in 2016, and has not only
2 restored the City's reputation for honest governance, but has also rebuilt its fiscal sustainability
3 and civic pride; and

4 WHEREAS, During his tenure, Mayor Diossa led the city out of bankruptcy, raising its
5 long-term bond rating to “BBB” investment grade and has been successful in securing millions in
6 federal and foundation funding for quality of life and infrastructure improvements. He has
7 championed improvements to infrastructure and better sanitation equipment, and opened a
8 tutoring center for children whose parents are immigrants and don’t speak English fluently; and

9 WHEREAS, Mayor James Diossa has successfully made Central Falls the “comeback
10 city” of Rhode Island and through his example, he has energized a new generation of civic
11 leaders, and he is eminently deserving of our gratitude and admiration; now, therefore be it

12 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
13 honors and thanks Mayor James Diossa for his dedicated service to the people of the City of
14 Central Falls and the State of Rhode Island. We moreover wish him, his fiancée, Senator Sandra
15 Cano, and their beautiful baby daughter, Arianna Hallel, good health, happiness, and much
16 success in all future endeavors; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
18 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Honorable James Diossa.

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