

2021 -- H 6362

LC002906

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

HOUSE RESOLUTION

HONORING KATHLEEN SULLIVAN CONNELL ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT AS THE RHODE ISLAND STATE DIRECTOR OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS (AARP) AND THANKING HER FOR A LIFETIME OF DEDICATION TO HEALTH CARE AND PUBLIC SERVICE IN RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Diaz, Slater, Ruggiero, Craven, Caldwell, Edwards, Kennedy, and Kislak

Date Introduced: May 25, 2021

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Kathleen Connell was born in the City of Newport. She attended St. Mary's  
2 School and St. Catherine Academy, and graduated magna cum laude from Salve Regina  
3 University with a Bachelor's degree in Nursing. Continuing her education, she attained a Master's  
4 degree in International Relations from Salve Regina University; and

5 WHEREAS, Mrs. Connell's initial foray in health care was with the Visiting Nurse  
6 Service, working with the sick and elderly, followed by teaching health at a Newport middle  
7 school and creating the school system's first health care curriculum; and

8 WHEREAS, For sixteen years, Mrs. Connell served on the Middletown School  
9 Committee and the Town Council. She subsequently served a term in the Rhode Island Senate,  
10 and three terms as Rhode Island's Secretary of State, where she championed the issues of voter  
11 education and parity for women and is also credited with saving historical records in the Rhode  
12 Island state capitol's basement; and

13 WHEREAS, In 1999, Mrs. Connell became the Rhode Island State Director of the  
14 American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) a position she has held for more than twenty  
15 years. During her tenure as Director, she has worked on myriad issues concerning senior health  
16 care, including long-term care, as well as better pay for nurses, improved nursing education, and  
17 access to quality health care for all citizens; and

18 WHEREAS, Mrs. Connell has also served as the coordinator of governmental relations at

1 Brown University's Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory, vice chair of the  
2 Democratic State Committee, was appointed to the Credentials Committee for the Democratic  
3 National Convention in Atlanta in 1988, was a founding director and past president of Shake-A-  
4 Leg, and served on the Board of Directors of the Visiting Nurse Association of Newport and on  
5 the Board of Incorporators of Delta Dental. She was also the President of the Japan-America  
6 Society/Black Ships Festival; and

7 WHEREAS, Highly regarded throughout Rhode Island and the Health Care field, Mrs.  
8 Connell has been honored with a panoply of awards including, a citation from the Consul General  
9 of Japan; the John E. Fogarty Humanitarian Award; the Salve Regina University Alumna of the  
10 Year Award; and the Juliette Low Award from the Girl Scouts of Rhode Island. In 2010, she was  
11 inducted into the RI Heritage Hall of Fame, and in 2013, was the recipient of the Isabelle Ahearn  
12 O'Neill Award; and

13 WHEREAS, In addition to her vast civic service, Mrs. Connell is the devoted mother of  
14 Larry, Kelly, and Kathleen and was the wife of the late Gerald Connell; and

15 WHEREAS, Kathleen Connell has served the people of Rhode Island with honor and  
16 devotion. She has left an indelible mark on health care in our State and has fully distinguished  
17 herself as a person worthy of our recognition, admiration, and gratitude; now, therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby  
19 congratulates Kathleen Connell on her retirement and wishes her the very best health and  
20 happiness; 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 Mrs. Kathleen Connell.

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