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LC000596/SUB A
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

A N A C T

RELATING TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS - SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGES

Introduced By: Senators McCaffrey, and de la Cruz

Date Introduced: January 12, 2021

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 15-3-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 15-3 entitled "Solemnization
2 of Marriages" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **15-3-5. Officials empowered to join persons in marriage.**

4 Every ordained clergy or elder in good standing; every justice of the supreme court,
5 superior court, family court, workers' compensation court, district court or traffic tribunal; the clerk
6 of the supreme court; every clerk, administrative clerk, or general chief clerk of a superior court,
7 family court, district court, or traffic tribunal; magistrates, special or general magistrates of the
8 superior court, family court, traffic tribunal or district court; administrative clerks of the district
9 court; administrators of the workers' compensation court; every former justice or judge and former
10 administrator of these courts; every former chief clerk of the district court; every former clerk,
11 administrative clerk, or general chief clerk of a superior court; the secretary of the senate; elected
12 clerks of the general assembly; any former secretary of the senate; any former elected clerk of the
13 general assembly who retires after July 1, 2007; judges of the United States appointed pursuant to
14 Article III of the United States Constitution; bankruptcy judges appointed pursuant to Article I of
15 the United States Constitution; and United States magistrate judges appointed pursuant to federal
16 law, may join persons in marriage in any city or town in this state; and every justice and every
17 former justice of the municipal courts of the cities and towns in this state and of the police court of
18 the town of Johnston and the administrator of the Johnston municipal court, while he or she is
19 serving as an administrator, and every probate judge and every former probate judge may join

1 persons in marriage in any city or town in this state, and wardens of the town of New Shoreham
2 may join persons in marriage in New Shoreham. In addition to the foregoing, the governor shall
3 designate, upon application, any person eighteen (18) years or older to solemnize a particular
4 marriage on a particular date and in a particular city or town, and may for cause at any time revoke
5 such designation. In the case of persons so designated by the governor, the secretary of state shall
6 promulgate rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement and carry out the provisions of
7 this section. The secretary of state shall issue a certificate of designation upon payment of twenty-
8 five dollars (\$25.00) for applications delivered by mail, facsimile or hand. All applications
9 submitted electronically shall pay a fee of twenty dollars (\$20.00). Upon payment, a certificate of
10 designation shall be issued within twenty-one (21) days. The certificate shall expire upon
11 completion of the solemnization. The fees collected under this section shall be deposited into the
12 general fund.

13 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

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RELATING TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS - SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGES

1 This act would allow the governor to designate any person, upon application, eighteen (18)
2 year old or older to solemnize a marriage within the state of Rhode Island on a particular day and
3 within a particular city or town. Said authorization would expire upon completion of the marriage
4 or the following day of the scheduled marriage, whichever occurs first. A fee in the amount of
5 twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) would be a prerequisite and would be payable to the secretary of state.

6 This act would take effect upon passage.

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