

2022 -- H 8340

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LC006098  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING THE JOYOUS OCCASION OF THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
BURRILLVILLE LIONS CLUB AND RECOGNIZING THEIR CONTINUING  
COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY THROUGH HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS AND  
HANDS-ON SERVICE AS THEY PRACTICE THE LIONS' MOTTOS OF "WE SERVE" AND  
"WHERE THERE'S A NEED, THERE'S A LION"

Introduced By: Representatives Place, Newberry, Quattrocchi, Corvese, and Phillips

Date Introduced: June 14, 2022

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, The service organization known as Lions Club International was founded on  
2 the principles of good citizenship and good fellowship in Chicago, Illinois in 1917; and

3 WHEREAS, The Burrillville Lions Club came into being in the spring of 1947 when  
4 Judge John M. Booth (who later became an International Director), prevailed upon  
5 newspaperman Louis Bleiweis to assemble a nucleus of twenty-five business and professional  
6 men to form the charter membership of a new unit in Burrillville, which would be sponsored by  
7 the neighboring Woonsocket Lions Club; and

8 WHEREAS, The Burrillville Lions Club received its charter at the Narragansett Hotel in  
9 Providence, Rhode Island, from then-President of Lions International, Clifford Pierce of  
10 Memphis, Tennessee, on April 17, 1947; and

11 WHEREAS, The Burrillville Lions Club's first officers were: President Thomas  
12 Eccleston, Jr.; 1st Vice President John J. Corrigan, Jr.; 2nd Vice President Louis Bleiweis;  
13 Secretary Orville W. Ripley; Recording Secretary Joseph V. McGuinness; Treasurer Andrew  
14 Mackenzie; Lion Tamer Gerald L. Tatro; Tail Twister Leo T. Carrier; and Directors Frank J.  
15 Cavanaugh, Harold L. Smith, Arthur Paquette and Earle O. Tatro; and

16 WHEREAS, Charter members of the Burrillville Lions Club included residents whose  
17 families had a profound impact on the community, including past long-time Town Councilman  
18 Louis Bleiweis, Burrillville teacher, coach, athletic director, and past School Superintendent

1 Thomas Eccleston, former School Superintendent Joseph C. Sweeney, and several business  
2 owners and other professionals; and

3 WHEREAS, A vital force in the community throughout its seventy-five years of  
4 existence, the Burrillville Lions Club can look back with justifiable pride on its premiere major  
5 project -- the Learn to Swim program for children -- originally conducted jointly with the  
6 Woonsocket YMCA, at the former Flynn's Beach, and now run in conjunction with the Town of  
7 Burrillville at Spring Lake Beach; and

8 WHEREAS, The Burrillville Lions Club has continuously met at the same one  
9 Burrillville location throughout its history -- Gus' Red Tavern Restaurant, originally owned by  
10 Charter Member Arthur Paquette, subsequently owned by former Club members J. Roland  
11 Duguay and later his son, John R. Duguay, and currently by "Uncle Ronnie" and Paula Dumas;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, Over the years, the Burrillville Lions Club has had many members serve at  
14 the District 42 level such as Arthur B. Corvese, Dorothy A. Cardon, and Marcel A. Cote as  
15 District Governors, Florent Reith as Deputy District Governor, and several members serving as  
16 Treasurer, Zone Chairpersons, and in other positions; and

17 WHEREAS, The Burrillville Lions Club is the only international service organization  
18 continuously operating in the Town of Burrillville, with service now extending into the Town of  
19 North Smithfield; and

20 WHEREAS, The Lions Club is well known and respected for its dedication to sight-  
21 conservation issues. By conducting vision screenings in community schools, collecting and  
22 redistributing used eye glasses, equipping hospitals and clinics, distributing medicine and raising  
23 awareness of eye diseases, Lions work toward the mission of insuring vision for all; and

24 WHEREAS, The Burrillville Lions also engage in numerous local and international  
25 service projects, promoting diabetes awareness, conducting White Cane Day which supports the  
26 RI Sight Foundation activities, fundraising to support the RI Children with Cancer Fund,  
27 distributing dictionaries to the third grade classes of Burrillville and North Smithfield schools,  
28 collecting and recycling metal which supports the Fidelco Seeing Eye Dog program, support of  
29 various food banks in the community, and much more, thereby effectively making the world and  
30 the community they serve better places to live; and

31 WHEREAS, Throughout the years, many Burrillville resident students have been  
32 awarded college scholarships by the Burrillville Lions Club; and the Burrillville Lions Club  
33 initiated and continues to organize, in conjunction with the Burrillville Department of Public  
34 Works, Parks and Recreation, annual Earth Day activities, including a Town-wide awareness

1 program and clean-up carried out by scores of community volunteers; and

2 WHEREAS, The Burrillville Lions Club meets the needs of our community and the  
3 world every day because “where there’s a need, there’s a Lion” and is committed to the motto:  
4 “We Serve”; now, therefore, be it

5 RESOLVED, That this House of the State of Rhode Island hereby congratulates the  
6 Burrillville Lions Club as this superb organization celebrates its 75th Anniversary. As the  
7 membership of the Burrillville Lions Club reflects with justifiable pride on its many  
8 accomplishments, this House and the grateful citizens of Burrillville and North Smithfield join  
9 the Club in looking ahead to a future replete with continued devoted service to the community;  
10 and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
12 transmit a duly certified copy of the resolution to the Burrillville Lions Club.

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