

2022 -- S 2834

LC005720

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

SENATE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING APRIL OF 2022, AS "ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Senator Cynthia Armour Coyne

Date Introduced: April 05, 2022

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, Alcohol Awareness Month is a public health program organized by the
2 National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence as a way of increasing outreach and
3 education regarding the dangers of alcoholism and issues related to alcohol. The program was
4 started in April of 1987; and

5 WHEREAS, The disease of addiction continues to devastate Rhode Island's communities
6 and remains a public health emergency that continues to pose a significant public health and
7 safety threat to the State, costing hundreds of lives each year; and

8 WHEREAS, In addition to opioids and heroin, abuse of other dangerous substances,
9 including alcohol, is on the rise, and the disease of addiction is not exclusive to any one
10 substance; and

11 WHEREAS, Alcohol use disorder (AUD) is a chronic brain disorder that is characterized
12 by an impaired ability to stop or control alcohol use despite adverse social, occupational, or
13 health consequences and often goes untreated. The number of individuals affected by alcoholism
14 and AUD during the COVID-19 pandemic has risen significantly, and the dangers of excessive
15 alcohol use should not be ignored; and

16 WHEREAS, Alcohol use disorder affects every community and alcohol consumption is
17 the third-leading cause of preventable death in the United States, according to research conducted
18 in 2018; and

19 WHEREAS, The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration reports

1 that AUD was the most common substance use disorder among adults in the United States in
2 2018, affecting 14.25 million people; and

3 WHEREAS, In 2019, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
4 reported that around 58,000 Rhode Island adults qualify as suffering from alcohol use disorder
5 and 53,000 Rhode Island adults need, but are not receiving, AUD treatment at a specialty facility.
6 That means that 91.38 percent of Rhode Island adults suffering from alcohol use disorder need,
7 but are not receiving, AUD treatment; and

8 WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Morbidity and
9 Mortality Weekly Report states that in Rhode Island there were approximately 339 alcohol
10 attributable deaths each year and 27.6 years of life lost per alcohol-attributable death from 2011
11 to 2015; and

12 WHEREAS, Nationally, alcohol-related disorders are a leading cause of 7-day and 30-
13 day hospital readmissions. In 2013, alcohol use and dependence was the number one reason for
14 potentially preventable hospital readmission related to a substance use disorder initial admission
15 in Rhode Island; and

16 WHEREAS, Emergency department visits for alcohol-related diagnoses increased by 47
17 percent for both men and women from 2006-2014, and the costs for such visits increased from
18 \$4.1 billion to \$15.3 billion in the same time period. In 2016, alcohol-related disorders were the
19 tenth most common reason among all Rhode Islanders, for a visit to a Rhode Island emergency
20 department. In 2014, alcohol abuse was eighth in reasons for potentially preventable emergency
21 department visits in Rhode Island and it was second in those covered by Medicaid; and

22 WHEREAS, Alcohol use has increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to
23 RTI International, alcohol consumption, exceeding drinking guidelines, and binge drinking
24 increased from February 2020 to November 2020. Specialists at hospitals across the country said
25 rates of admissions for alcoholic liver disease have leapt by up to 50 percent since March 2020;
26 and

27 WHEREAS, A 2021 article in the Journal of General Internal Medicine stated “the full
28 impact of COVID-19 on alcohol use is not yet known. However, the current rise in drinking
29 during the acute phase of the pandemic mandates a deliberate and clear public health and medical
30 response and a multifaceted approach”; and

31 WHEREAS, Meeting people where they are in their recovery journey is a critical
32 component of public health and every setting of care should be aware of the signs of dangerous
33 alcohol use, trained in screening and assessing for, and treating, alcohol use disorder; and

34 WHEREAS, In December 2020, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 (Pub. L.

1 116-260) was enacted, which included \$1.65 billion in supplemental SAPT Block Grant funding
2 provided as part of the law's section dedicated to COVID-19 relief; and

3 WHEREAS, In March 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Pub. L. 117-2) was
4 enacted, which included \$1.5 billion in longer term supplemental SAPT Block Grant funding;
5 now, therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby commemorates April
7 of 2022, as "Alcohol Awareness Month" in the State of Rhode Island; and it be further

8 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby respectfully requests that the Governor of the State
9 of Rhode Island, the Honorable Daniel McKee, the Executive Office of Health and Human
10 Services, the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals, the
11 Department of Corrections, and the Department of Health prioritize increasing public and
12 provider awareness of the health risks associated with dangerous alcohol consumption, the
13 consumption of alcohol with other substances, the risks of alcohol overdose, screening and
14 assessing for alcohol use disorder, and the availability of treatment for alcohol use disorder in
15 Rhode Island, including primary care, hospital, and criminal justice settings; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby respectfully requests that the Governor of the State
17 of Rhode Island, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the Department of
18 Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals, the Department of Corrections,
19 and the Department of Health consider utilizing the supplemental SAPT Block Grant funding
20 provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act and the American Rescue Plan for these efforts;
21 and it be further

22 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
23 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable Daniel McKee, Governor of the
24 State of Rhode Island, the Secretary of the Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human
25 Services, the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental
26 Disabilities and Hospitals, the Director of the Rhode Island Department of Corrections, and the
27 Director of the Rhode Island Department of Health.

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