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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

SENATE RESOLUTION

**JOYOUSLY CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN
HELLENIC EDUCATIONAL PROGRESSIVE ASSOCIATION**

Introduced By: Senators Raptakis, McCaffrey, Gallo, Algieri, Kallman, Euer, Murray,
Quezada, DiMario, and Zurier

Date Introduced: June 16, 2022

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, The American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (Order of
2 AHEPA) was founded on July 26, 1922, in Atlanta, Georgia, by eight visionary Greek
3 immigrants to help unify, organize, and protect against the bigotry, discrimination, and
4 defamation faced by people of all ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds perpetrated
5 predominately by the Ku Klux Klan; and

6 WHEREAS, The Mission of AHEPA is to promote the ideals of ancient Greece, which
7 include philanthropy, education, civic responsibility, and family and individual excellence
8 through community service and volunteerism; and

9 WHEREAS, Since its inception, AHEPA has instilled in its members an understanding of
10 their Hellenic heritage and an awareness of the contributions made to the development of
11 democratic principles and governance in the United States and throughout the world; and

12 WHEREAS, AHEPA membership, which currently exceeds 25,000, is not limited to only
13 people of Greek Origin. President Franklin Roosevelt, for example, was a dues paying member of
14 AHEPA for more than fourteen years, from March of 1931 until his passing, as was Rhode Island
15 United State Senator Claiborne Pell, who joined in 1963 and received AHEPA's highest honor,
16 the Socrates Award, in 1982; and

17 WHEREAS, Members of AHEPA served in the Armed Forces of the United States to
18 protect American freedom and to preserve those democratic ideals that are part of the Hellenic
19 legacy, and specifically in World War II, were parachuted behind enemy lines in Nazi-occupied

1 Greece to help its liberation; and

2 WHEREAS, AHEPA raised more than \$253 million dollars to purchase United States
3 War bonds during World War II, for which AHEPA was named an official issuing Agent for
4 United States War Bonds by the Department of the Treasury, an honor that no other civic
5 organization was able to achieve at that time; and

6 WHEREAS, The members of AHEPA donated \$612,000 dollars towards the restoration
7 of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, New York, for which AHEPA received special
8 recognition by the United States Department of the Interior; and

9 WHEREAS, The AHEPA National Housing Program has sponsored safe and dignified
10 affordable housing to vulnerable senior citizens administered by the United States Department of
11 Housing and Urban Development Section 202, Supportive Housing for the Elderly Program, that
12 has yielded 4,467 units in 87 communities across 19 States; and

13 WHEREAS, AHEPA financially supports scholarships, natural disaster and humanitarian
14 relief, medical research, and countless other charitable and philanthropic causes by contributing
15 more than \$2,000,000 annually from its national, district, and local levels collectively; and

16 WHEREAS, In 1996, in the spirit of their Hellenic heritage and in commemoration of the
17 Centennial Olympic Games held in Atlanta, Georgia, members of AHEPA raised \$775,000 for
18 the “Tribute” to Olympism Sculpture, the “fan-like” structure that helped to save lives during the
19 Olympic Bombing at Centennial Olympic Park; and

20 WHEREAS, President George H.W. Bush cited AHEPA as one of America’s “Thousand
21 Points of Light”; now, therefore be it

22 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby joyously
23 commemorates the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the American Hellenic Educational
24 Progressive Association (AHEPA), applauds its mission, and commends the many charitable
25 contributions of its members to communities around the world; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby respectfully requests that the Honorable Daniel J.
27 McKee, Governor of the State of Rhode Island, issue a proclamation acknowledging the 100th
28 Anniversary of AHEPA and its many accomplishments; and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
30 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable Daniel J. McKee, Governor of
31 the State of Rhode Island, and to District 7, Chapter 106, Cranston, Rhode Island, Chapter 121,

1 Pawtucket, Rhode Island, and Chapter 245, Newport, Rhode Island.

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