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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N

**CELEBRATING THE 171ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S. -- JAPAN TREATY OF PEACE
AND AMITY**

Introduced By: Representatives Kennedy, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale,
Edwards, Kazarian, Azzinaro, Abney, Carson, and Phillips

Date Introduced: April 01, 2025

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Both the State of Rhode Island and Japan take pride in their rich connection
2 to the sea and their maritime history, with the former embracing its moniker as the Ocean State;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, In addition to the long maritime tradition, the historical importance of
5 Rhode Island's shipwrights and the ship-building industry – and consequently the significance of
6 these to the United States Navy – is exemplified in the history of Newport; and

7 WHEREAS, The personage of Commodore Matthew Perry, raised in the aforementioned
8 maritime culture of Newport, through his service in the United States Navy and in his role in the
9 1854 signing of the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Peace and Amity, is a significant representative of
10 Rhode Island's impact in United States-Japan relations and in world history; and

11 WHEREAS, This year honors the 171st Anniversary of the signing of the aforementioned
12 treaty which is the first ever treaty of Japan with another state, and which became a trigger for the
13 opening and modernization of Japan; and

14 WHEREAS, In commemoration in part of Commodore Perry's actions leading to the
15 establishment of formal Japan-U.S. diplomatic relations, the Newport-Shimoda sister city
16 relationship was established in 1958, and is honored in various activities promoting this
17 friendship; and

18 WHEREAS, LeBaron Colt, a Senator from Rhode Island and Chairman of the U.S.
19 Senate Committee on Immigration in 1924, vigorously opposed the discriminatory Immigration

1 and Nationality Act of 1924, which declared the Japanese and other Asians to be aliens ineligible
2 for citizenship; and

3 WHEREAS, The Naval War College in Newport and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense
4 Force work closely together to promote national security and regional stability through shared
5 resources, strategies, and commitments; and

6 WHEREAS, This year marks the 120th Anniversary of the Treaty of Portsmouth, which
7 ended the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, and recognizes the influence of Naval War College
8 President Alfred Thayer Mahan on Japanese naval officers and strategist Saneyuki Akiyama, who
9 played a central role in the war; and

10 WHEREAS, Through festivities such as the annual Black Ships Festival by the Japan-
11 America Society of Rhode Island and the Cherry Blossom Princess Crowning Ceremony by the
12 Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, and the birthday celebration of Hachiko in Woonsocket,
13 Rhode Islanders continue to promote an appreciation of Japanese culture and a warm friendship
14 with Japan, while in Japan the annual Black Ships Festival in Shimoda, a sister city with
15 Newport, and Perry Festival in Yokosuka are celebrated with the participation of tens of
16 thousands of people; and

17 WHEREAS, The Japanese community along with other communities has contributed to
18 fostering cultural richness and diversity in the State; and

19 WHEREAS, Brown University and the University of Rhode Island have a thriving and
20 growing Japanese research and language studies program; and

21 WHEREAS, The United States–Japan Alliance is the cornerstone of peace and prosperity
22 in the Indo-Pacific region; a relationship that is characterized by a mutual upholding of the values
23 of democracy, rule of law, and friendly trade; and

24 WHEREAS, In February of 2025, President Donald J. Trump and Prime Minister
25 ISHIBA Shigeru held their first official meeting in Washington, D.C., where they affirmed their
26 determination to pursue a new golden age for U.S.- Japan relations that upholds a free and open
27 Indo-Pacific; and

28 WHEREAS, Japan has been the largest investor in the United States for five consecutive
29 years, creating nearly one million U.S. jobs and the Japanese private sector contributes to the
30 economic growth of Rhode Island through continued investment and the creation of employment
31 opportunities. Fifty-eight Japanese companies operate in this State and they comprise the second
32 highest number of foreign companies operating in Rhode Island. Japanese companies also employ
33 2,300 people in the State of Rhode Island. In 2023, Rhode Island’s exports to Japan totaled \$182
34 million, primarily within the pharmaceutical and medical sectors; and

1 WHEREAS, The Japanese-American community in Rhode Island has continued to
2 maintain friendly relationships with Japan while simultaneously striving to realize a harmonious
3 multi-national society as part of the larger Asian-American community in Rhode Island; now,
4 therefore be it

5 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
6 recognizes the 171st Anniversary of the signing of the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Peace and Amity, and
7 declares March 31st – the date the treaty was signed in 1854 – as “Japan Day”, and honors the
8 steady friendship between the State of Rhode Island and Japan and wishes to further deepen and
9 promote cultural, economic, technological and people-to-people ties between the State and Japan;
10 and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
12 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the President of the United States Donald J.
13 Trump, Rhode Island’s federal elected officials, Senator Jack Reed, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse,
14 Congressman Seth Magaziner, and Congressman Gabe Amo, and the Honorable Seiichiro
15 Takahashi, Consul General of Japan in Boston.

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