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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF DR. WILLIAM R. HOLLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Shekarchi, Blazejewski, McEntee, Chippendale, Fogarty, Ajello, Solomon, Boylan, Tanzi, and Slater

Date Introduced: January 13, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sorrow that this House of Representatives has learned of the
2 passing of Dr. William R. Holland, of South Kingstown. Dr. Holland was the son of the late
3 William and Elizabeth Holland. He was the beloved husband of the late Karen Holland for 65
4 years; and

5 WHEREAS, Dr. William Holland attained a Bachelor's degree from the University of
6 Rhode Island, a Master's degree from the University of Massachusetts, and a Doctorate in
7 Educational Administration from Boston University. Dr. Holland was also a stellar athlete who
8 was a starting forward on legendary Coach Ernie Calverly's URI Basketball team. Dr. Holland
9 also met the love of his life at URI, his college sweetheart and future wife, Karen. Dr. Holland
10 served our nation with honor and distinction as an officer in the United States Army; and

11 WHEREAS, Dr. Holland had a long and exemplary career as a public educator in Rhode
12 Island and Massachusetts. He served with distinction and dedication for 26 years as a teacher,
13 school administrator and superintendent in five different school districts in Rhode Island and
14 Massachusetts. While serving as the superintendent of schools in Narragansett, Dr. Holland had
15 the great honor of seeing both the elementary and high schools recognized as Blue Ribbon
16 schools by the United States Department of Education; and

17 WHEREAS, Dr. Holland then proceeded to serve for 18 years as a Professor Emeritus at
18 Rhode Island College, while simultaneously spending ten years as the Executive Director of the
19 Rhode Island Association of School Principals before his appointment as the Commissioner of
20 Higher Education by Governor Lincoln Almond; and

1 WHEREAS, During his tenure as the Rhode Island Commissioner of Higher Education
2 from 1999 to 2002, Dr. Holland oversaw a multi-million dollar state college budget. Under Dr.
3 Holland's leadership, guidance and direction, much-needed upgrades, improvements and
4 construction rapidly took place on all three college campuses. Important buildings and structures
5 were built such as the Ryan Center, Boss Arena and new dormitories at URI, a new addition to
6 the Warwick CCRI campus, the approval of a new CCRI campus in Newport, along with the
7 construction of the Nazarian Center for the Performing Arts at Rhode Island College; and

8 WHEREAS, Dr. Holland received numerous honors throughout his distinguished
9 professional career including the Scholar-Athlete Award from the Rhode Island House of
10 Representatives, and Excellence in Professional Service awards from several New England and
11 National Associations. Dr. Holland also served as the President of the New England Association
12 of Schools and Colleges in 1985, and later served for 20 years as the Chair of NEASC overseas
13 accreditation teams in 13 international schools in Europe; and

14 WHEREAS, Dr. Holland was also the author of five books and numerous professional
15 articles. In his later years, he served as a consultant and Interim Superintendent in Central Falls
16 and Warwick, where he led professional searches for new Superintendents in those communities.
17 Dr. Holland also served as the Chair of the Board of Trustees at College Unbound in Providence;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, In addition to his late wife, Karen, Dr. Holland leaves behind his children,
20 Kevin and his wife, Jennifer, Kathleen Meringolo and her husband, Richard, and Steven and his
21 wife, Katherine, as well as his grandchildren, Kara Meringolo Lurio and her husband, Ben, Katie
22 Meringolo Miller and her husband, Jack, Zack Holland and his wife, Dr. Alexis Holland, Maxx,
23 Madison, Cameron, Braden, and Jade Holland. He also leaves behind his great-grandchildren,
24 Drew, Ellie, and James Lurio, and Owen and Frankie Miller. Dr. Holland also leaves behind his
25 brothers, Peter Holland and Richard Holland; now, therefore be it

26 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
27 expresses its deepest condolences on the passing of Dr. William R. Holland; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
29 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the family of Dr. William R. Holland.

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