

2026 -- H 8343

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF SOJOURNER
HOUSE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Casey, Chippendale, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, J. Brien,
Phillips, Solomon, Ajello, Paplauskas, and Edwards

Date Introduced: March 24, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Sojourner House was founded in 1976 by a group of Brown University
2 students and community members concerned about what was then a silent epidemic: domestic
3 violence; and

4 WHEREAS, Sojourner House has operated for 50 years, serving over 60,000 Rhode
5 Islanders; and

6 WHEREAS, Domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking continue to affect
7 individuals and families across Rhode Island, making the work of organizations like Sojourner
8 House vital to the safety and well-being of our communities; and

9 WHEREAS, For fifty years, Sojourner House has been a leader in Rhode Island's
10 response to domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking, helping tens of thousands of
11 survivors and their families rebuild safe and stable lives; and

12 WHEREAS, Sojourner House today is based in Providence and Woonsocket, and serves
13 communities across the state experiencing domestic abuse, sexual violence, and human
14 trafficking, including survivors and their children, providing wraparound services such as support
15 groups, emergency shelter, transitional and permanent supportive housing, sexual health
16 advocacy, and emotional support; and

17 WHEREAS, Through collaboration and partnership statewide with government agencies,
18 nonprofit organizations, and key stakeholders in Rhode Island, Sojourner House works to develop
19 solutions that work for promoting, advancing, and maintaining the safety and well-being of

1 survivors; and

2 WHEREAS, Housing remains the number one barrier for individuals fleeing violence to
3 find safety. Sojourner House has increasingly focused on housing solutions for Rhode Islanders
4 experiencing domestic abuse, sexual violence, and human trafficking by developing a continuum
5 of housing options, including emergency shelter, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and
6 permanent supportive housing. The organization has specifically focused on permanent housing
7 options in recent years by purchasing and leasing 197 units statewide allowing for the most
8 effective intervention for survivors and their families transitioning out of dangerous and violent
9 situations; and

10 WHEREAS, Sojourner House has over 70 dedicated staff across 4 offices who are
11 experts on providing trauma-informed support to survivors at every step of the process and are
12 engaged community members that are grounded in the specified needs of survivors in Rhode
13 Island communities; and

14 WHEREAS, Celebrating and recognizing the 50th Anniversary of Sojourner House
15 during this legislative session highlights and honors the legacy and ongoing work of advancing
16 support for domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking survivors in Rhode Island by
17 providing effective housing solutions and trauma-informed wraparound services; now, therefore
18 be it

19 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
20 celebrates the 50th Anniversary of Sojourner House of Rhode Island and extends its gratitude and
21 deep appreciation for five decades of service to survivors and families across Rhode Island; and
22 be it further

23 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
24 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Vanessa Volz, CEO of Sojourner House of
25 Rhode Island.

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