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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

SENATE RESOLUTION

JOYOUSLY CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CREATION OF THE
RHODE ISLAND STATE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Introduced By: Senators Tikoian, Ruggerio, Lawson, Patalano, LaMountain,
Appollonio, de la Cruz, Rogers, Gallo, and Felag
Date Introduced: April 01, 2025

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

- 1
- WHEREAS, The Rhode Island General Assembly authored and passed chapter 588 of the
- 2
- Acts and Resolves on April 2, 1925; and
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- WHEREAS, The statutory words gave birth to the Rhode Island State Police; and
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- WHEREAS, This historic legislation’s intent was to create a highly disciplined, mobile
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- police organization to deal with new and rapidly expanding enforcement problems, especially
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- those compounded by the automobile; and
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- WHEREAS, The founding statute was unique in several ways, including the precise
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- manner in which authority and accountability were placed in the office of the Superintendent; and
- 9
- WHEREAS, The General Assembly clearly decided to focus responsibility for the
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- success of the future of the new concept in that one office by mandating then and now that the
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- Superintendent report directly to the Office of the Governor; and
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- WHEREAS, The statute authorized the Superintendent to appoint other members of the
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- department with enlistments of three years and set out other responsibilities of the Superintendent
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- and members; and
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- WHEREAS, The statute provided for the Superintendent to establish headquarters and
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- substations as deemed most suitable for protection of rural and suburban areas of the state; and
- 17
- WHEREAS, It authorized the Superintendent to acquire the necessary motor vehicles,
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- equipment and supplies; and
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- WHEREAS, The new law provided protection for State Police officers in the event of

1 death or injury suffered in the line of duty; and

2 WHEREAS, The law became effective immediately upon passage, and on April 9, 1925

3 Governor Aram J. Pothier nominated Everitte St. John Chaffee as Superintendent, and the Rhode

4 Island State Senate confirmed the appointment; and

5 WHEREAS, Colonel Chaffee's military training played a key role in his appointment,

6 and the first enlistees all had prior military experience, which provided a strong organizational

7 structure and discipline in the development of the new and elite police agency; and

8 WHEREAS, The first headquarters was established at the Benefit Street Arsenal and

9 opened on April 14, 1925; and

10 WHEREAS, Colonel Chaffee made a special effort to use equipment manufactured in

11 Rhode Island; and

12 WHEREAS, A highly competitive enlistment process was necessary to ensure the new

13 recruits would bear substantial responsibility for carrying out a new concept of law enforcement

14 in Rhode Island, which was severely and frequently tested during the department's formative

15 years; and

16 WHEREAS, Approximately 600 applicants applied for the initial twenty-three positions,

17 and training the first troopers began on May 11, 1925; and

18 WHEREAS, Some recruits left good jobs and others had opportunities for greater

19 compensation and shorter hours. When asked why recruits chose the Rhode Island State Police,

20 the result has always been characterized by a sense of pride in the organization; and

21 WHEREAS, For 100 years the Rhode Island State Police has maintained its high

22 standards and tradition of excellence in law enforcement that was established by Colonel Everitte

23 St. John Chaffee; and

24 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island State Police has been a leader in law enforcement and has

25 provided training and resources to numerous other law enforcement agencies in Rhode Island, the

26 United States and abroad; and

27 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island State Police has an illustrious 100-year history, which is

28 also closely tied to the history of the State of Rhode Island; and

29 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island State Police is commemorating its historic centennial

30 celebration in the year 2025 with several events open to the public; now, therefore be it

31 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby joyously celebrates the

32 100th Anniversary of the creation of the Rhode Island State Police Department; and be it further

33 RESOLVED, That April of 2025 will henceforth be known as State Police Month in

34 Rhode Island with April 2, 2025, being designated as State Police Day in Rhode Island; and be it

1 further

2 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
3 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Superintendent of the Rhode Island State
4 Police Department, Colonel Darnell S. Weaver.

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