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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

SENATE RESOLUTION

STRONGLY REPROVING THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD'S PLAN TO REMOVE
38 BUOYS FROM RHODE ISLAND WATERS

Introduced By: Senator Linda L. Ujifusa

Date Introduced: May 29, 2025

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, The maritime industry in Rhode Island is a significant economic driver,
2 generating billions of dollars in sales and employing thousands. The Rhode Island maritime
3 industry and boating safety are conclusively intertwined; and

4 WHEREAS, Boating safety is a major focus for our State, which relies on safe navigation
5 and maritime practices, particularly with the prevalence of recreational boating and the potential
6 for accidents; and

7 WHEREAS, Rhode Island is home to about 400 aids to navigation (AtoN), including
8 roughly three dozen coastal buoys that would be eliminated under the U.S. Coast Guard's recent
9 proposal which is the result of a federal shift toward using more modernized navigation systems
10 like GPS, electronic charts and smartphone apps and fewer physical markers; and

11 WHEREAS, There are approximately 40,000 boats registered in Rhode Island, with
12 many thousands more visiting the Ocean State each year; and

13 WHEREAS, Many of these are smaller vessels with less technologically equipped
14 boaters who lack the type of equipment essential to navigate safely without guidance from AtoN,
15 particularly in congested waterways like Narragansett Bay where aids to navigation, including
16 buoys, are crucial for safe boating; and

17 WHEREAS, In addition, complete reliance on electronic navigation systems is risky,
18 especially in areas with complex waterways and changing conditions; and

19 WHEREAS, Aids to navigation (AtoN), including buoys and markers, serve various

1 purposes, including marking channels, hazards, restricted areas, and special markings like traffic
2 separations, and are crucial for safe navigation; and

3 WHEREAS, "The maritime industry in Rhode Island, particularly related to navigation
4 and boating safety, is vital, with the U.S. Coast Guard and the Rhode Island Department of
5 Environmental Management (DEM) playing key roles"; and

6 WHEREAS, The Coast Guard's goal and purpose needs to be cognizant and guided by
7 the views and generational knowledge of Rhode Island boaters who live and sail the Ocean State's
8 waters; now, therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby urgently requests the
10 U.S. Coast Guard to retain and maintain the 38 buoys, currently considered for removal from
11 Rhode Island waters, in order to ensure the safety of both recreational boaters and commercial
12 traffic; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
14 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to members of the Rhode Island Congressional
15 Delegation, Terry Gray, Director of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management,
16 Rear Admiral Michael E. Platt, Commander, First Coast Guard District, and Captain Clinton J.
17 Prindle, Chief of Staff of the Coast Guard First District.

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