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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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SENATE RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING THE 172ND ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED STATES AND JAPAN  
TREATY OF PEACE AND AMITY

Introduced By: Senators Ujifusa, Lawson, Gu, LaMountain, Britto, Felag, Urso, Zurier,  
Lauria, and McKenney

Date Introduced: March 31, 2026

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1           WHEREAS, The State of Rhode Island and Japan share a long and meaningful history of  
2 cultural exchange, cooperation, and friendship; and

3           WHEREAS, The first official diplomatic contact between the United States and Japan  
4 occurred in 1853, when Commodore Matthew Perry, a native of South Kingstown, Rhode Island,  
5 led an expedition of “Black Ships” to Japan under orders from President Millard Fillmore; and

6           WHEREAS, This expedition resulted in the signing of the Treaty of Peace and Amity  
7 between the United States and Japan on March 31, 1854, marking the beginning of formal  
8 diplomatic relations and expanded interaction and trade between the two nations; and

9           WHEREAS, Japan has been the largest non-domestic investor in the United States for six  
10 consecutive years, supporting nearly one million American jobs, and the United States has  
11 likewise been the leading outside investor in Japan; and

12           WHEREAS, The strong local economic relationship between Rhode Island and Japan is  
13 demonstrated by Japanese companies, including Toray Plastics (America), which is celebrating  
14 its 100th anniversary this year, and Fujifilm, operating in Rhode Island as well as by numerous  
15 Rhode Island-based businesses engaged in trade with Japan; and

16           WHEREAS, The relationship between the United States and Japan is characterized by  
17 mutual respect, admiration, and a shared commitment to peace, understanding, and collaboration;  
18 and

19           WHEREAS, Rhode Island and Japan maintain strong partnerships across many fields,

1 including commerce, academia, education, technology, the arts, and culture; and

2 WHEREAS, Educational and cultural exchanges between Rhode Island and Japan have  
3 provided invaluable opportunities for students, scholars, artists, and professionals to learn from  
4 one another, share experiences, and build lasting connections that enhance cross-cultural and  
5 international understanding; and

6 WHEREAS, Through diverse events such as the annual Black Ships Festival and Gala  
7 hosted by the Japan-America Society of Rhode Island, the Japan-America Friendship Festival  
8 organized by the Japan-America Society of Southern New England, the Cherry Blossom Princess  
9 Crowning Ceremony presented by the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, celebrations of  
10 Hachiko the legendary loyal Akita dog’s birthday in Woonsocket, and popular culture events such  
11 as Providence AnimeCon, Rhode Islanders continue to celebrate and embrace Japanese culture  
12 and foster warm friendships with Japan; and

13 WHEREAS, In Japan, tens of thousands of people annually attend the Black Ships  
14 Festival in Shimoda, a sister city to Newport, and the Perry Festival in Yokosuka,  
15 commemorating historical ties with Commodore Perry and the United States; and

16 WHEREAS, The Rhode Island School of Design Museum promotes research and public  
17 understanding of Japanese art through current and forthcoming exhibitions and international  
18 collaboration with the Chiba City Museum of Art, including touring exhibitions of its Japanese  
19 art collection throughout Japan; and

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

23 WHEREAS, This year marks the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States,  
24 a milestone underscoring the enduring importance of the U.S. and Japan alliance and the  
25 continued strengthening of friendly relations and broad-ranging cooperation between the two  
26 nations; and

27 WHEREAS, The Japan-United States Summit meeting held in Washington, D.C. on  
28 March 19, 2026, underscores the importance of deepening the friendly relations between Japan  
29 and the United States, as well as broad-ranging Japan-U.S. cooperation, including economy and  
30 security, and demonstrated the unwavering Japan-U.S. Alliance; now, therefore be it

31 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby celebrates the  
32 longstanding and meaningful relationship between the United States and Japan and recognizes the  
33 contributions of individuals, organizations, and institutions that have worked tirelessly to promote  
34 friendship, cooperation, and mutual understanding between the two countries; and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby honors the 172nd anniversary of the signing of the  
2 U.S.–Japan Treaty of Peace and Amity and declares March 31, the date on which the treaty was  
3 signed in 1854, as “Japan Day” in the State of Rhode Island, while encouraging continued  
4 collaboration and partnership between the United States and Japan and reaffirming a shared  
5 commitment to peace, prosperity, and mutual respect for future generations; and be it further

6           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
7 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the President of the United States; United States  
8 Senator Jack Reed; United States Senator Sheldon Whitehouse; United States Representative Seth  
9 Magaziner; United States Representative Gabe Amo; Rhode Island Governor Dan McKee; Rhode  
10 Island Lieutenant Governor Sabina Matos; Rhode Island Treasurer James Diossa; Rhode Island  
11 Secretary of State Gregg Amore; and the Honorable Seiichiro Takahashi, Consul General of  
12 Japan in Boston.

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