

2023 -- H 5003

LC000029

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

HOUSE RESOLUTION

EXTENDING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF THE HONORABLE  
CATHERINE E. GRAZIANO, RN, PHD.

Introduced By: Representatives Shekarchi, Corvese, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Ajello,  
Noret, Phillips, Kennedy, Costantino, and Ackerman

Date Introduced: January 05, 2023

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sadness that this House has learned of the passing of the  
2 Honorable Catherine Graziano, the beloved wife of the late Louis Graziano and a well-respected  
3 nursing professional and former member of the Rhode Island State Senate; and

4 WHEREAS, Born Catherine E. Hawkins, she was the daughter of the late William and  
5 Catherine Hawkins, and the sister of the late Sr. Mary Macrina Hawkins, RSM, William Hawkins  
6 and John Hawkins. She was the cherished mother of Mary Pontarelli and her husband, Michael,  
7 William Graziano and his wife, Jodee, Catherine Graziano and her husband, John Ryan, Paul  
8 Graziano and his wife, Sara, Carol MacLean and her husband, Gavin, and the late Louis Graziano  
9 and Joseph Graziano. She was also the beloved grandmother of seven grandchildren, five great-  
10 grandchildren and many nieces, nephews and cousins; and

11 WHEREAS, Mrs. Graziano was a graduate of St. Xavier Academy and earned her  
12 Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing at Salve Regina University. Upon graduation she took a  
13 position as a Professor of Nursing and later as the Chair of the Nursing Department at Salve  
14 Regina until retiring in 1997. She had also worked weekends at St. Joseph Hospital in Providence  
15 for over 40 years. In addition, during her years teaching at the University, she earned a Master's  
16 Degree in Medical Surgical Nursing from Boston College, a Master's Degree in Health Services  
17 Administration from Salve Regina University, and a PhD from Pacific Western University; and

18 WHEREAS, Mrs. Graziano had also served as an expert witness in numerous medical  
19 malpractice cases in Rhode Island and co-authored and contributed on textbooks related to

1 nutrition and health. She was a member of numerous professional organizations including,  
2 serving as President of the RI State Nurses Association, and a member of the American Nurses  
3 Association, National League for Nursing, and Accreditation Visitor for Collegiate Programs in  
4 Nursing; and

5 WHEREAS, The Honorable Catherine Graziano was elected to the RI State Senate in  
6 1992, and served until 2002. Earning the respect of her fellow Senators, she was named Chair of  
7 the Health & Human Services Committee where she fought for issues related to health care, the  
8 elderly, education, pay equity and environmental issues, and was the proud sponsor of the "Safe  
9 Haven Legislation"; and

10 WHEREAS, Recognized and highly-regarded in the nursing profession as well as her  
11 efforts in the legislature, Mrs. Graziano was honored as the first recipient of the RI State Nurses  
12 Association Award for Outstanding Nursing Educator in Rhode Island, received the Bishop  
13 Mulvee Award as Outstanding Pro-Life Legislator, and a Right-to-Life Recognition Award, as  
14 well as many additional accolades and awards. She had also volunteered her time with many  
15 altruistic organizations and was a devoted parishioner of St. Thomas Church; and

16 WHEREAS, The Honorable Catherine Graziano was a devoted wife, mother and  
17 grandmother, a nursing professional and a legislator. She was a role model to generations of  
18 nursing students and leaves a legacy of commitment and perseverance that will long be  
19 remembered; now, therefore be it

20 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives hereby expresses deepest condolences  
21 on the passing of the Honorable Catherine E. Graziano; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
23 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Mary Pontarelli and family, William Graziano  
24 and family, Catherine Graziano and family, Paul Graziano and family, and Carol MacLean and  
25 family.

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