

2021 -- H 6115

LC002341

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

HOUSE RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF FRANK LATORRE

Introduced By: Representatives Blazewski, Filippi, Ajello, Hull, Williams, Batista,
Biah, Amore, Diaz, and Slater

Date Introduced: March 09, 2021

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sadness that this House has learned of the passing of Frank
2 LaTorre, the former Director of the Providence Downtown Improvement District and a beloved
3 fixture within the city who worked tirelessly to make downtown Providence a vibrant place where
4 creative people could thrive and their businesses excel; and

5 WHEREAS, Mr. LaTorre graduated from Boston College in 1971 with a bachelor's
6 degree in economics and political science. In his formative college years, he became interested in
7 vegetarian lifestyles while taking a trip with a group of friends driving from the Berkshires to
8 California on an old school bus. He would later own the City of Portland, Maine's first ever
9 vegetarian restaurant. His lifelong love for music expressed itself in college when he attended the
10 Woodstock Music and Art Festival in August of 1969. He would be well-known later for his large
11 collection of music cd's, his love of Bob Marley, and buying a Rhode Island license plate that
12 read "WE JAMN"; and

13 WHEREAS, Mr. LaTorre, in his years living in Portland, Maine, also served for two
14 decades as the Director of the city's Public Assembly Facilities Division, where he provided
15 oversight and management of the 1,900-seat performing arts center Merrill Auditorium, as well as
16 an exposition center and a baseball and football stadium; and

17 WHEREAS, In 2005, then-Providence Mayor David Cicilline appointed Mr. LaTorre to
18 the Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force, whose focus was to raise public awareness about the
19 problems created by underage drinking. It was also at this time that Mr. LaTorre began his
20 important work with the Providence Downtown Improvement District. Additionally, he worked

1 on other important issues such as parks conservancy, hospitality and safe communities.
2 Congressman Cicilline said of Mr. LaTorre, "I was proud to work with him throughout my time
3 as Mayor to strengthen Downtown Providence and improve the quality of life for the residents of
4 our Capital City"; and

5 WHEREAS, The love Mr. LaTorre had for Downtown Providence was limitless. Former
6 Mayor Joseph Paolino said that for Mr. LaTorre, "Downtown Providence was his extended
7 family." He was tireless in his willingness to promote and serve the City, from dressing up as
8 Santa at a one-day Christmas event when the person supposed to be "Santa" never showed up, to
9 attending through the years all of the important art, culture and tourism events held in Providence,
10 from attending PVDFest, the music series at Burnside Park, WaterFire, and countless tree
11 lightings. He walked the streets of Downtown Providence all the time and it seemed as if
12 everyone knew him. Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza had high praise for Mr. Frank LaTorre,
13 describing him as a "long-time Downtown champion" and a "tireless advocate for the nighttime
14 economy"; and

15 WHEREAS, Mr. LaTorre leaves behind his children Christine LaTorre, Caroline LaTorre
16 and Gregory LaTorre. He also leaves behind his former wife and best friend Susan LaTorre; now,
17 therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
19 expresses its deepest condolences on the passing of Mr. Frank LaTorre, and expresses its deepest
20 gratitude for his tireless service and advocacy in support of Downtown Providence; and be it
21 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 Christine LaTorre of Oakhurst, New Jersey,
24 Caroline LaTorre of Mahopac, New York, Gregory LaTorre of Boston, Massachusetts and Susan
25 LaTorre of Cape Elizabeth, Maine.

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