

2024 -- H 8051

LC005453

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING MARCH OF 2024, AS "NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH" IN THE
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Shallcross Smith, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale,
Ajello, Handy, O'Brien, McGaw, Baginski, and Alzate

Date Introduced: March 12, 2024

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Social Workers enter the profession because they have a strong desire to
2 help empower individuals, families, communities, and our nation to overcome issues that prevent
3 them from reaching their full potential; and

4 WHEREAS, Social Workers have worked for more than a century to improve the human
5 well-being and enhance the basic needs of all people; and

6 WHEREAS, Social Workers follow a Code of Ethics that call on them to fight social
7 injustice and respect the dignity and worth of all people; and

8 WHEREAS, Social Workers positively touch the lives of the 1.09 million Rhode
9 Islanders each day and in a variety of places, including schools, hospitals, the military, child
10 welfare agencies, community centers, and in federal, state and local government; and

11 WHEREAS, The 2024 Social Work Month Theme is "Empowering Social Workers!"
12 "According to the bureau of Labor Statics, the median pay for social workers in 2022 was
13 \$55,350. Considering that in order to do their work many social workers must earn a master's
14 degree and go through the expensive process to gain licensure, this is not enough....It is
15 important for the public to support legislation and initiatives that empower and support the social
16 work profession and improve their bottom line." This includes the "Improving access to Mental
17 Health Act, student loan debt relief, and social work safety legislation"; and

18 WHEREAS, Social Workers are the largest professional group with mental health
19 licenses in Rhode Island, working daily to help thousands of Americans overcome mental

1 illnesses such as depression and anxiety; and

2 WHEREAS, Social Workers are on the frontlines of the nation’s opioid addiction crisis,
3 helping people get the treatment they need and prevail over substance use disorders; and

4 WHEREAS, Social Workers have helped people cope with death and grief and helped
5 people directly affected by the housing crisis in Rhode Island; and

6 WHEREAS, Social Workers have helped this nation live up to its values by advocating
7 for equal rights for all, including people of color, people who are Indigenous, people who are
8 LGBTQIA2S+, or people who follow various faiths; and

9 WHEREAS, The Social Work profession is one of the fastest growing careers in the
10 United States, with more than 720,000 social workers today, 6,000 of them practicing in Rhode
11 Island, and more than 60,000 more social workers are expected to enter the profession over the
12 next decade; and

13 WHEREAS, Social Workers have continued to push for changes that have made our
14 society a better place to live, including a livable wage, improved workplace safety, and social
15 safety net programs that help ameliorate poverty, hunger, and homelessness; and

16 WHEREAS, Social Workers endeavor to work throughout our society to meet people
17 where they are and help empower people and our society to reach the goals they wish to attain;
18 now, therefore be it

19 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
20 celebrates March of 2024 as “National Social Work Month” and with gratitude and admiration,
21 recognizes the numerous contributions made by Rhode Island’s Social Workers. We moreover
22 call upon all citizens to join the National Association of Social Workers Rhode Island Chapter in
23 celebration and support of the Social Work profession; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
25 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Rebekah Gewirtz, MPA, Executive Director,
26 National Association of Social Workers Rhode Island (NASW-RI).

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