

2024 -- H 8322

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

HOUSE RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING THE 170TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S. -- JAPAN TREATY OF PEACE
AND AMITY

Introduced By: Representatives Kennedy, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale,
Kazarian, Edwards, Azzinaro, Tanzi, Ajello, and Felix

Date Introduced: May 30, 2024

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Both the State of Rhode Island and Japan take pride in their rich connection
2 to the sea and their maritime history, with the former embracing its moniker as the Ocean State;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, In addition to the long maritime tradition, the historical importance of
5 Rhode Island's shipwrights and the ship-building industry - and consequently the significance of
6 these to the United States Navy - is exemplified in the history of Newport; and

7 WHEREAS, The personage of Commodore Matthew Perry, raised in the aforementioned
8 maritime culture of Newport, through his service in the United States Navy and in his role in the
9 1854 signing of the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Peace and Amity, is a significant representative of
10 Rhode Island's impact in United States-Japan relations and in world history; and

11 WHEREAS, This year coincides with the 170th Anniversary of the signing of the
12 aforementioned treaty which is the first ever treaty of Japan with another state, and which became
13 a trigger for the opening and modernization of Japan; and

14 WHEREAS, In commemoration in part of Commodore Perry's actions leading to the
15 establishment of formal Japan-U.S. diplomatic relations, the Newport-Shimoda sister city
16 relationship was established in 1958, and is honored in various activities promoting this
17 friendship; and

18 WHEREAS, LeBaron Colt, a Senator from Rhode Island and Chairman of the U.S.
19 Senate Committee on Immigration in 1924, vigorously opposed the discriminatory Immigration

1 and Nationality Act of 1924, which declared the Japanese and other Asians to be aliens ineligible
2 for citizenship; and

3 WHEREAS, Through festivities such as the annual Black Ships Festival by the Japan-
4 America Society of Rhode Island and the Cherry Blossom Princess Crowning Ceremony by the
5 Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, Rhode Islanders continue to promote an appreciation of
6 Japanese culture and a warm friendship with Japan, while in Japan the annual Black Ships
7 Festival in Shimoda and Perry Festival in Yokosuka are celebrated with the participation of tens
8 of thousands of people; and

9 WHEREAS, The Japanese community along with other communities has contributed to
10 fostering cultural richness and diversity in the State; and

11 WHEREAS, Brown University and the University of Rhode Island have a thriving and
12 growing Japanese research and language studies program; and

13 WHEREAS, The United States--Japan Alliance is the cornerstone of peace and prosperity
14 in the Indo-Pacific region; a relationship that is characterized by a mutual upholding of the values
15 of democracy, rule of law, and friendly trade; and

16 WHEREAS, This strong bond between the United States and Japan was reaffirmed by
17 Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio's Official Visit to the United States from April 8th to
18 14th and a Summit Meeting with President Joseph Biden on April 10th in Washington, D.C.,
19 where the two leaders concurred that Japan and the U.S. are global partners working on the issues
20 of the international society and shared the view to jointly uphold and bolster the free and open
21 international order based on the rule of law; and

22 WHEREAS, The Japanese private sector contributes to the economic growth of Rhode
23 Island through continued investment and the creation of employment opportunities. Fifty-seven
24 Japanese companies operate in this State and they comprise the second highest number of foreign
25 companies operating in Rhode Island. Japanese companies also employ 2,100 people in the State
26 of Rhode Island. In 2023, Rhode Island's exports to Japan totaled \$126 million, primarily within
27 the pharmaceutical and medical sectors; and

28 WHEREAS, The Japanese American community in Rhode Island has continued to
29 maintain friendly relationships with Japan while simultaneously striving to realize a harmonious
30 multi-national society as part of the larger Asian-American community in Rhode Island; now,
31 therefore be it

32 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
33 recognizes the 170th Anniversary of the signing of the U.S.-Japan Treaty of Peace and Amity and
34 steady friendship between the State of Rhode Island and Japan and wishes to further deepen and

1 promote cultural, economic, technological and people-to-people ties between the State and Japan;
2 and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
4 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, President of the
5 United States, Rhode Island's federal elected officials, Senator Jack Reed, Senator Sheldon
6 Whitehouse, Congressman Seth Magaziner, and Congressman Gabe Amo, and the Honorable
7 Kotaro Suzuki, Consul General of Japan in Boston.

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