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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

SENATE RESOLUTION

**EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF THE HONORABLE SENATOR
JAMES S. D'AMBRA**

Introduced By: Senators Ruggiero, and Bissaillon

Date Introduced: January 14, 2025

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sadness that this Senate has learned of the passing of the
2 Honorable James S. D'Ambra, a distinguished educator, public servant, and former member of the
3 Rhode Island Senate. He was the beloved husband of the Honorable Lauren D'Ambra for 43
4 years; and

5 WHEREAS, The Honorable James D'Ambra was born in Providence, son of the late
6 Philip and Mary D'Ambra. He was a 1964 graduate of La Salle Academy, and went on to attain a
7 Bachelor of Arts degree in 1968 and a Master of Arts degree in Teaching in 1972, from Rhode
8 Island College; and

9 WHEREAS, Senator D'Ambra began his exemplary education career in 1968 when he
10 accepted a position at Cranston West High School to teach history and government, where he was
11 widely admired for the passion he brought to the teaching profession in the classroom, his tireless
12 work ethic, and his deep desire to make a positive difference in the lives of his students; and

13 WHEREAS, Senator D'Ambra had a distinguished "second career" in education when he
14 accepted an administrative position in 1999 with the Providence School Department to serve as
15 the Assistant Principal of Nathanael Greene Middle School and eventually retired as the Principal
16 of Oliver Hazard Perry Middle School, where he focused on improving attendance, the classroom
17 experience and increasing parental involvement. Senator D'Ambra also worked at the Urban
18 League where he advocated strongly on behalf of more diversity and better services for
19 underrepresented communities; and

1 WHEREAS, The Honorable James D'Ambra's distinguished public service record also
2 included serving in the Rhode Island General Assembly for 16 years. He was elected to the
3 Rhode Island Senate in 1977, representing District 5, and was widely respected for his vast
4 knowledge about issues related to education and the State budget. He was valued by his peers for
5 his ability to build consensus on difficult issues and for his abiding integrity. In recognition of
6 these qualities, his colleagues chose him to serve as the Chair of the Finance Committee and later,
7 the Health, Education and Welfare Committee; and

8 WHEREAS, Senator D'Ambra served on the Rhode Island College Alumni Association
9 Board of Directors and on the Board for the Rhode Island Association of Former Legislators. He
10 also hosted a public access television show named "Straight Talk". Senator D'Ambra also served
11 as a Lector for many years at Saint Augustine's Church, and received the prestigious Lumen
12 Gentium Award for Public Service in honor of his outstanding service to the parish, the Diocese
13 of Providence, and the local community; and

14 WHEREAS, In his free time, Senator D'Ambra enjoyed eating Chinese food, sunbathing
15 at the beach in Narragansett, and driving his white corvette. Always putting his family first, he
16 was steadfast in ensuring that his children received the best education possible, and spent as much
17 time as possible with his grandchildren, attending their sports games, recitals and school events;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, In addition to his wife, the Honorable Lauren D'Ambra, he is survived by
20 his children, Christine Monahan and James S. D'Ambra, Jr., and his grandchildren, Kameron,
21 Elle, and Preston. Senator D'Ambra was the brother of the late Philip D'Ambra and son-in-law of
22 the late Genevieve LaPolla; now, therefore be it

23 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby expresses its deepest
24 condolences on the passing of the Honorable James S. D'Ambra; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
26 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to his wife, the Honorable Lauren D'Ambra and
27 his children, Christine Monahan and James S. D'Ambra, Jr.

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