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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

SENATE RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RHODE
ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF STATE POLICE

Introduced By: Senators Coyne, Goodwin, Algieri, Lynch, and Conley

Date Introduced: April 07, 2015

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, On April 2nd of 1925, the Rhode Island General Assembly established the
2 Rhode Island Department of State Police in order to provide for the safety and security of the
3 citizens of this state with an organized, highly-trained and disciplined, state-wide law
4 enforcement agency; and

5 WHEREAS, In April of 1925, then-Governor Aram Pothier nominated, and the State
6 Senate confirmed, Everitte St. John Chaffee, as the first Superintendent of the State Police; and

7 WHEREAS, Utilizing a highly competitive process which combined physical prowess,
8 mental acuity, and psychological focus, and relying heavily on military experience and
9 organizational concepts, Colonel Chaffee selected 23 applicants, from an original pool of 600, to
10 become the first members of the State Police; and

11 WHEREAS, The Department's first headquarters opened on April 14th of 1925, at the
12 Providence Marine Corps of Artillery Headquarters on Benefit Street in Providence and
13 equipment and uniforms were procured; and

14 WHEREAS, Rigorous training of the new recruits referred to as "The Amateurs" by the
15 Colonel, began in May. Sadly, the first officer to be killed in the line of duty, John Weber,
16 occurred on June 17th. Graduation for the remaining twenty-two members of the first class
17 commenced on August 6th; and

18 WHEREAS, By the end of 1925, the State Police had established northern, South
19 County, and an island patrol. Since its inception, 756 men and women have served as members of

1 the Rhode Island State Police with seven of those officers dying "In the Service of the State":
2 Recruit Trooper John Weber, Trooper Arthur L. Staples, Jr., Lieutenant Arnold L. Poole, Trooper
3 Joseph J. Gallivan, Trooper Bradford G. Mott, Trooper Daniel L. O'Brien, and Sergeant Walter J.
4 Burgess; and

5 WHEREAS, In addition, twelve Superintendents have served the Rhode Island State
6 Police: Colonel Everitte St. John Chaffee, Colonel Edward J. Kelley, Colonel Jonathan F.
7 Harwood, Colonel E. Ralph Bonat, Colonel John T. Sheehan, Colonel Walter E. Stone, Colonel
8 Harrie C. Gill, Colonel Bernard W. Manchester, Colonel Edmond S. Culhane, Jr., Colonel Steven
9 M. Pare, Colonel Brendan P. Doherty, and Colonel Steven G. O'Donnell; and

10 WHEREAS, Since 1925, the proud and long-standing tradition of excellence in law
11 enforcement has remained the hallmark of the Rhode Island State Police and they have diligently
12 upheld the original Core Values of Honor, Honesty, Courage, Fairness, Integrity, Excellence, and
13 Devotion to Duty; now, therefore be it

14 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island Providence Plantations
15 hereby celebrates the 90th Anniversary of the founding of the Rhode Island Department of State
16 Police. We moreover honor and thank all the courageous men and women whose distinguished
17 and dedicated service has protected the people of this state for the past nine decades; and be it
18 further

19 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
20 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Colonel Steven G. O'Donnell.

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