

2024 -- S 2792

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

SENATE RESOLUTION

**CELEBRATING ST. PATRICK'S DAY AND THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA AND IRELAND**

Introduced By: Senator John P. Burke

Date Introduced: March 19, 2024

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, On March 17th, during the annual celebration of the Feast of Saint Patrick,
2 the Patron Saint of Ireland, Irish Americans join with people of all ethnic origins who, for one
3 day, are considered honorary citizens of Ireland as they celebrate Saint Patrick and a love of all
4 things Irish; and

5 WHEREAS, Wielding the devotion of his faith like a great sword of righteousness, and
6 using the strength of his intellect and the power of his passions, Saint Patrick assimilated the
7 ancient pagan Irish myths into a Christian message, and in so doing, converted all of Ireland to
8 Christianity during his lifetime; and

9 WHEREAS, Irish immigrants to Rhode Island helped to form the cultural foundation of
10 our State, and Rhode Islanders of Irish lineage today proudly sing of their roots in Ballinamore
11 and Ballinasloe, in Ennistymon and Enniscorthy, in Cahirciveen and Castlebarr, and in
12 Skibbereen and Skerries; and

13 WHEREAS, The songs of Ireland are the tragic songs of love and the joyous songs of
14 battle: the nostalgic reveries of the sorrows and the glories that are the Emerald Isle; and the
15 lamentations of life's myriad travails and the odes to joy and the life eternal; and

16 WHEREAS, A century ago, in October of 1924, Ireland formally opened diplomatic
17 relations with the United States of America when Timothy Smiddy presented his credentials to
18 President Calvin Coolidge. Following the Irish people's long and painful struggle for
19 independence, the U.S. was one of the first nations to recognize the fledgling Irish state earlier

1 that year, and when Smiddy emerged from the White House, he had become Ireland's first
2 Ambassador to any country in the World; and

3 WHEREAS, It was very appropriate that Ireland's first representative overseas should be
4 dispatched to Washington D.C. for, while 1924 marked the beginning of formal diplomatic
5 relations, the deep Irish American connection dated back centuries; and

6 WHEREAS, Today, nearly one tenth of Americans identify as being of Irish ancestry.
7 Irish immigrants helped build the America we know today, not only the physical infrastructure -
8 the skyscrapers of Manhattan or the transcontinental railroad-but also the political construct that
9 is America. Irish people have made an enormous contribution to public debate and politics in
10 America, from their local communities right up to the White House; and

11 WHEREAS, More than twenty American Presidents claimed some Irish ancestry. But the
12 influence of Irish America extends well beyond the Oval Office and the Capitol Building, to
13 every state within the Union, most evident by the significant number of state legislators within the
14 American Ireland State Legislators Caucus, which is open to everyone of Irish Heritage and those
15 who are supporters of Ireland; and

16 WHEREAS, Since Timothy Smiddy's momentous audience in the Oval Office 100 years
17 ago, a further eighteen Irish Ambassadors have presented credentials to U.S. Presidents. Over this
18 time, Ireland's relations with the United States have evolved significantly. From an impoverished
19 and internationally isolated state, scarred by years of conflict, Ireland has transformed over the
20 past century. Ireland today is at peace, economically prosperous and culturally vibrant; and

21 WHEREAS, This transformation is due to the support of friends in the United States,
22 from the crucial role America played in brokering peace in Northern Ireland – culminating with
23 the 1998 Good Friday Agreement– to the huge American economic investment in Ireland; and

24 WHEREAS, There are almost one thousand US companies in Ireland, employing over
25 two hundred thousand people directly. Our economic relationship is truly two-way; some one
26 hundred thousand people are employed in the U.S. by over 650 Irish-owned companies, across all
27 fifty states. Indeed, Ireland is now the ninth largest source of foreign direct investment in the US;
28 and

29 WHEREAS, The US-Irish relationship is a shining example of how ancestral ties,
30 historical connections, cultural affinities, and shared values can create a foundation for enduring
31 partnership and mutual prosperity. Irish American state legislators across the United States are
32 playing a vitally important role in fostering this partnership and ensuring that it continues and
33 flourishes for another century to come; now, therefore be it

34 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby celebrates St. Patrick's

1 Day and the 100th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United
2 States of America and Ireland; 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 Chair of the American Irish State
5 Legislators Caucus, Senator Mark Daly, the 24th Chair of the Senate of Ireland and to the
6 National Co-Chairs listed below; Representative Brian Patrick Kennedy, Rhode Island;
7 Assemblywoman Carol Murphy, New Jersey; Assemblyman Robin Vos, Wisconsin; Senator
8 Shannon O'Brien, Montana; Assemblyman James Gallagher; California; the Honorable Fran
9 Hurley, Illinois; Representative Killian Timoney, Kentucky; Senator Wayne Harper, Utah;
10 Representative Bridget Walsh Moore, Missouri; and the Honorable Mia Costello, Alaska.

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