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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

HOUSE RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF GLORIA RUSSELL

Introduced By: Representatives Azzinaro, Shekarchi, Kennedy, and Fogarty

Date Introduced: February 02, 2017

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with great sadness that this House of Representatives has learned of the
2 passing of Gloria Russell; and

3 WHEREAS, Gloria Russell, a native of Pawcatuck, passed away at the age of ninety. In
4 her youth, she was a model, attending Boston's prestigious modeling school, Academy Moderne,
5 and modeling professionally in Boston and New York. Later, she became a groundbreaker and
6 was a symbol of progress to many when she was hired as the first female reporter for the
7 Westerly Sun; and

8 WHEREAS, Ms. Russell got her start in public affairs when she hosted a radio call-in
9 program called "Party Line with Gloria." From this auspicious start, she began a journalism
10 career that saw her work for four newspapers: the Westerly Sun, Groton News, Norwich Bulletin
11 and the Providence Journal, as well as two radio stations. She worked on hard news stories,
12 features, series, and all aspects of the news business, and was respected by all who knew her for
13 her tireless work ethic, stylistic writing and stellar news reporter's instincts; and

14 WHEREAS, Ms. Russell had a diverse journalistic career that ranged from interviewing
15 many public figures through the years, including the late Vice President Hubert Humphrey and
16 the late United States Senator Claiborne Pell, to collaborating with former investigative reporter
17 Ellyn Santiago on a special "Hurricane of 1938" feature. She was a trailblazer and an inspiration
18 to many professional women. Ellyn Santiago said about her friend Gloria, upon learning of her
19 passing, that she was "a fearless and peerless journalist", and "a beloved friend and courageous
20 colleague"; and

1 WHEREAS, Gloria Russell received the Athena Award in 2009 from the Ocean
2 Community Chamber of Commerce and was inducted into the Rhode Island Press Association
3 Hall of Fame in 2003, the Rhode Island Journalism Hall of Fame in 2006, and the State Press
4 Association Hall of Fame. She was also named Rhode Island's Most Outstanding Older Worker in
5 2006, and received the Westerly Historical Society's Julia Award in 2016; and

6 WHEREAS, Ms. Russell was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution,
7 Phebe Green Ward Chapter, and was a Girl Scout assistant leader for many years. She enjoyed
8 helping the scouts with their arts and crafts projects, and teaching them how to write stories and
9 articles. Ms. Russell also vigorously supported numerous organizations including Stand Up For
10 Animals and the Westerly Airport Association. She enjoyed and found it relaxing to create things
11 with her hands including hand-braided rugs and clothespin dolls. She also made dust caps and
12 turbans for chemotherapy patients and would anonymously drop off these items at local oncology
13 doctors' offices; and

14 WHEREAS, Gloria Russell leaves behind her daughter, Lea Rockholz, her grandchildren,
15 and was predeceased by her husband, the late Harold C. Russell, and by her son, the late Eric
16 Taivalanti; now, therefore be it

17 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and
18 Providence Plantations hereby expresses its condolences on the passing of Gloria Russell; and be
19 it further

20 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
21 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Lea Rockholz.

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