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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

SENATE RESOLUTION

COMMEMORATING MAY OF 2019 AS "MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH" IN
THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Senators Lawson, Ruggerio, Felag, Algieri, and Satchell

Date Introduced: April 25, 2019

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, Since 1949, Mental Health America, joined by organizations from across
2 the country, have led the observance of May as Mental Health Month, with the mission of raising
3 awareness and educating the public about mental illnesses. This year marks its 70th Anniversary;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Mental Health Awareness Month strives to reduce the stigma, the negative
6 attitudes and misconceptions, that surround mental illnesses; and

7 WHEREAS, One of the main reasons why individuals do not seek professional help is
8 due to the stigma that surrounds mental health. Individuals are afraid to seek the help and
9 treatment they need because they may be judged, ridiculed and shunned by others or they may
10 even judge themselves and as a result, they often live in silence about their undiagnosed mental
11 health disorder; and

12 WHEREAS, Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental
13 health condition. Anyone can experience the challenges of mental illness regardless of their
14 background, age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion or economic status; and

15 WHEREAS, According to the National Institute of Mental Health, 18.1 percent of adults
16 living in the United States have experienced an anxiety disorder in the past year and nearly 1 in
17 25 adults in America are living with a serious mental illness; and

18 WHEREAS, Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States and according
19 to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Data & Statistics, 9.8 million adults,

1 age 18 or older thought about trying to kill themselves in 2015; and

2 WHEREAS, Each year millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental
3 health condition. Mental Health Awareness Month is a time to bring about change through
4 compassion, concern, open-mindedness, and understanding, and to celebrate the journeys of
5 resiliency and recovery of individuals living with mental illness; now, therefore be it

6 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
7 hereby commemorates May of 2019 as "Mental Health Awareness Month" and urges schools,
8 businesses, government agencies, and health-care providers to commit to promoting and ensuring
9 innovative prevention, diagnosis, and treatment, and to spreading awareness through education
10 programs and understanding for mental health issues; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
12 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Rhode Island Division of Behavioral
13 Healthcare, and the Mental Health Association of Rhode Island (MHARI).

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