

2020 -- S 2872

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

SENATE RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING MARCH 25, 2020, AS THE 199TH ANNIVERSARY OF GREEK
INDEPENDENCE DAY

Introduced By: Senators Raptakis, Euer, Lombardi, Gallo, and Conley

Date Introduced: June 16, 2020

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, On March 25, 1821, the Feast Day of the Annunciation, the Greek nation
2 reclaimed its ancient heritage as the "Cradle of Democracy" by overthrowing the yoke of
3 oppression which had enslaved its people since the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Conquered by
4 the Ottoman Turks in the 15th century, Greece waged a successful war of Independence (1821-
5 1829) and re-instituted a democratic form of government; and

6 WHEREAS, The people of the United States generously offered humanitarian assistance
7 to the Greek people during their struggle for independence; and

8 WHEREAS, The price for Greece in holding onto our common values in their region was
9 high, as hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed in Greece during World War II; and

10 WHEREAS, Greece is one of only three nations in the world, beyond the former British
11 Empire, that has been allied with the United States in every major international conflict over the
12 last 100 years; and

13 WHEREAS, Greece, located in a region where Christianity meets Islam and Judaism,
14 maintains excellent relations with Muslim nations and Israel, and demonstrates religious
15 tolerance; and

16 WHEREAS, The Ancient Macedonians were Hellenes and the northern Province of
17 Greece, Macedonia, are their Hellenic descendants; and

18 WHEREAS, Greece and the United States are at the forefront of the effort for freedom,
19 democracy, peace, stability, and human rights; and

1 WHEREAS, Over the past few years, the United States has significantly increased its
2 engagement with Greece in the maritime sector. In partnership with the Greek shipping fleet, the
3 United States is helping Greece and all of Southeast Europe ensure energy independence; and

4 WHEREAS, March 25, 2020, Greek Independence Day, marks the 199th Anniversary of
5 the beginning of the revolution that freed the Greek people from the Ottoman Empire and
6 celebrates the aspirations for democracy and tolerance that the people of Greece and the United
7 States share; and

8 WHEREAS, United States Secretary of State Mike Pompeo visited Greece on October 4,
9 2019, where he met with Greek leaders and together they signed the Mutual Defense Cooperation
10 Agreement (MDCA); and

11 WHEREAS, In January of 2020, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis visited the
12 United States and met with President Donald J. Trump, Vice President Michael Pence, Secretary
13 of State Mike Pompeo, and Congressional Leaders to enhance bilateral cooperation and discuss
14 issues related to trade, energy and mutual security; and

15 WHEREAS, Turkey has continued to destabilize the Aegean Sea and the Eastern
16 Mediterranean Sea region. As a result, Greece, Israel and Cyprus have formed a trilateral
17 cooperation agreement against the aggressive regional policies of Turkey. Each country's strong
18 relationship with the United States, as well as the prospect of an Eastern Mediterranean pipeline
19 enabling safe transmission of gas to Western Europe are critical to security and energy stability.
20 Passage of the Eastern Mediterranean Security and Energy Partnership Act of 2019 will facilitate
21 energy and security cooperation between the United States, Greece, Cyprus and Israel; and

22 WHEREAS, It is proper and desirable for the United States to celebrate this Anniversary
23 with the Greek people and to reaffirm the democratic principles from which these two great
24 nations were born; now, therefore be it

25 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
26 hereby celebrates March 25, 2020, as the 199th Anniversary of Greek Independence, reaffirms
27 Rhode Island's abiding commitment to the magnificent principles of democracy and religious
28 freedom, and urges Turkey to respect the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical
29 Patriarchate; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
31 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church of
32 Cranston, the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church of Pawtucket, the St. Spyridon Greek
33 Orthodox Church of Newport, members of the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation, the
34 Honorable Stratos Efthymiou, Consul General of the Hellenic Republic in Boston, and

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