WHEREAS, The week of April 5th through April 11th of 2021, is National Public Health Week, and the theme is "Building Bridges to Better Health"; and

WHEREAS, Since 1995, the American Public Health Association, through its sponsorship of National Public Health Week, has educated the public, policymakers and public health professionals about issues important to improving the public’s health; and

WHEREAS, Life expectancy in the United States dropped from 2014 to 2017, in the longest sustained decline since the Great Depression and only in 2018, did life expectancy begin to increase again. Further studies consistently show that the United States has a lower life expectancy than comparable countries; and

WHEREAS, There is a significant difference in health status, such as obesity, poor mental health, and drug use, among people living in rural areas compared with people living in urban areas, and this variance increases because rural residents are often more likely to face social determinants that negatively impact health, such as poverty, transportation barriers and lack of economic opportunity; and

WHEREAS, Public health professionals help communities prevent, prepare for, withstand, and recover from the impact of a full range of health threats, including disease outbreaks such as the Covid-19 pandemic, measles, surveillance and control systems; and

WHEREAS, Public health action, together with scientific and technological advances, has played a major role in reducing and, in some cases, eliminating the spread of infectious
disease, and in establishing today’s disease surveillance and control systems; and

WHEREAS, Six in ten United States adults have a chronic disease and four in ten have
two or more, and health issues such as alcoholism, obesity and tobacco use are the primary reason
for seven of every ten deaths annually in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Covid-19 pandemic has illuminated and exacerbated racial inequalities
and a growing number of local governments, state governments, and public health leaders have
declared racism a public health crisis; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
commemorates the week of April 5th through April 11th of 2021, as “National Health Week” and
calls upon the people of Rhode Island to use the observation of this week to help our families,
friends, neighbors, co-workers and leaders to better understand the value of public health and
support great opportunities to adopt preventive lifestyle habits in light of this year’s theme,
“Building Bridges to Better Health”; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Director Nicole-Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH,
Rhode Island Department of Health.

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