

2021 -- H 6245

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LC002705  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING APRIL OF 2021, TO BE "ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH" IN THE  
STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Casey, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Phillips, Hawkins,  
Craven, Cardillo, McEntee, Caldwell, and O'Brien

Date Introduced: April 15, 2021

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Alcohol Awareness Month is a public health program which began in April  
2 of 1987, and is organized by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence as a way  
3 of increasing outreach and education regarding the dangers of alcoholism and issues related to  
4 alcohol; and

5 WHEREAS, The Disease of addiction, including dangerous alcohol use, continues to  
6 devastate Rhode Island's communities and remains a public health emergency that poses a  
7 significant public health and safety threat to the State; and

8 WHEREAS, The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
9 (SAMHSA) reports that alcohol use disorder (AUD) was the most common substance abuse  
10 disorder among adults in the United States in 2018. In the same year, SAMHSA reported that  
11 around 59,000 Rhode Island adults qualify as suffering from AUD. Unfortunately, only 10.2  
12 percent of Rhode Island adults suffering from AUD receive the treatment they need; and

13 WHEREAS, AUD affects every community and demographic in Rhode Island. AUD is a  
14 chronic brain disorder that is characterized by an impaired ability to stop or control alcohol use  
15 despite adverse social, occupational, or health consequences and often goes untreated; and

16 WHEREAS, The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reported that in 2010, excessive  
17 drinking costs Rhode Island over \$886 million, which accounts for \$842 per person in Rhode  
18 Island. These costs result from losses in workplace productivity, health care expenses, criminal  
19 justice expenses, and motor vehicles crashes. About \$2 of every \$5 of the economic costs of

1 excessive alcohol use were paid by federal, state, and local governments; and

2           WJHEREAS, Alcohol consumption is the third-leading cause of preventable death in the  
3 United States. The CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report states that in Rhode Island  
4 there were approximately 337 alcohol attributable deaths each year and 27.4 years of life lost per  
5 alcohol-attributable death from 2011-2015; and

6           WHEREAS, Nationally, alcohol-related disorders are the leading cause of 7-day and 30-  
7 day hospital readmissions. In 2013, alcohol use and dependence was the number one reason for  
8 potentially preventable hospital readmission related to a substance use disorder initial admission  
9 in Rhode Island; and

10           WHEREAS, Emergency Department visit-related diagnoses increased by 47 percent for  
11 both men and women from 2006-2014, and the costs for such visits increased from \$4.1 billion to  
12 \$15.3 billion in the same time period. In 2016, alcohol-related disorders were the 10th most  
13 common reason, among all Rhode Islanders, for a visit to a Rhode Island emergency department.  
14 In 2014, alcohol abuse was 8th in reasons for potentially preventable emergency department visits  
15 in Rhode Island, and it was 2<sup>nd</sup> in those covered by Medicaid; and

16           WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic and its associated effects have led to elevated  
17 levels of harmful substance use, including an increase in alcohol use and related consequences.  
18 The dangers of excessive alcohol use should not be ignored; and

19           WHEREAS, According to RTI International, average drinks per day and binge drinking  
20 increased from February 2020 to April 2020; and

21           WHEREAS, A 2020 study funded by the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and  
22 Alcoholism found overall increases in alcohol consumption among adults, including a 41 percent  
23 increase in heavy drinking among women; and

24           WHEREAS, Some hospital systems nationally have noted increases in admissions for  
25 alcohol-related liver disease during the pandemic ranging from 30 percent to 50 percent higher  
26 than previous years; and

27           WHEREAS, Meeting people where they are in their recovery journey is a critical  
28 component of public health and every setting of care should be aware of the signs of dangerous  
29 alcohol use, trained in assessing and/or identifying AUD, and treating AUD; and

30           WHEREAS, In December of 2020, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021  
31 (P.L.116-260) was enacted, which included \$1.65 billion in the supplemental Substance Abuse  
32 Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant funding as provided as part of the law’s section  
33 dedicated to COVID-19 relief; and

34           WHEREAS, In March of 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2) was

1 enacted, which included \$1.5 billion in longer term supplemental SAPT Block Grant funding;  
2 now, therefore be it

3 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby  
4 proclaims April of 2021, to be "Alcohol Awareness Month"; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That this House hereby respectfully requests that the Governor of the State  
6 of Rhode Island, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the Department of  
7 Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals, the Department of Corrections,  
8 and the Department of Health consider utilizing the supplemental SAPT Block Grant funding  
9 provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act and the American Rescue Plan for these efforts;  
10 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 Honorable Daniel McKee, Governor of the  
13 State of Rhode Island, Womazetta Jones, MA, Secretary of the Rhode Island Executive Office of  
14 Health and Human Services, Patricia A. Coyne-Fague, Esq., Director of the Rhode Island  
15 Department of Corrections, Nicole Alexander-Scott, MD, MPH, Director of the Rhode Island  
16 Department of Health, and to the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare,  
17 Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals.

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