WHEREAS, Few rags to riches stories are as inspirational and heartwarming as the tale
of Kwity Paye, a young man born in a refugee camp in Guinea to Liberian parents who were
escaping war-torn Liberia and the first Liberian Civil War; and
WHEREAS, Kwity Paye was brought to Rhode Island with his brother Komotay Koffie
by his mother Agnes. As they grew older, his mother signed them up for football at the Boys &
Girls Club and it became a life passion for them both. After middle school, Kwity was accepted
into Bishop Hendricken, but the cost seemed to be beyond the family’s means. However, he
convinced his mother that attending Bishop Hendricken was worth the burden by promising her
that she would not have to pay for him to go to college; and
WHEREAS, His mother Agnes worked long and arduous hours, sometimes putting in
nearly 24 hour days, to pay for his tuition and Kwity worked tirelessly both in the classroom and
on the field to ensure that his mother’s sacrifice was a worthwhile endeavor. As a defensive
lineman and running back in high school, he was virtually unstoppable, bringing to the gridiron a
combination of size and speed rarely if ever seen in Rhode Island. In recognition of his success on
the field, Kwity was named the Rhode Island Gatorade Player of the Year in 2016; and
WHEREAS, Mr. Paye quickly drew the attention of the leading college football
universities in the country, and chose to play for the storied University of Michigan football
program. While at Michigan, he started four games at defensive end as a sophomore and became
the full-time starter at that position as a junior. Paye was dominant in Big Ten competition as a
junior, finishing the season with 50 tackles, 6.5 sacks and earning Second-Team All-Conference Big Ten honors. He repeated as a Second-Team All-Conference Big Ten selection in the COVID-19 shortened 2020 season; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Paye's work ethic is legendary within Rhode Island football circles. Whether it was practicing on the field, working out in the weight room or giving his all on every play in a game despite the bruises and pain that come routinely in football, no one has ever outworked Kwity Paye; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Paye is also a young man of impeccable character always willing to help out and make a positive difference with the next generation. Coach Willie Edwards, the former Moses Brown Football Coach and current Assistant Coach at Brown University, first met Kwity at a youth football camp volunteering to work with elementary-aged kids. Coach Edwards was amazed to observe the effort and selflessness exhibited by Mr. Paye on that day. From interacting with the kids and teaching them the basics of football, to picking up the pylons, and cleaning up the field and making sure the job was done properly, Mr. Paye’s humility, compassion, and tireless work ethic impressed everyone; and

WHEREAS, The NFL draft is not just about talent. Anyone taken in the draft, especially the first round, has talent. What really makes a young man special in the eyes of many NFL scouts and front office personnel is someone who can combine a high level of God-given talent with an extraordinary work ethic, and be a quality person all at the same time. Rhode Island-raised Kwity Paye is exactly this kind of person and that is why he became only the second Rhode Island high school football player to be chosen in the first round of the NFL draft when he was selected with the 21st pick in the 2021 NFL draft by the Indianapolis Colts; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby congratulates Kwity Paye on being selected in the first round of the 2021 NFL draft and wishes him continued success both on and off the gridiron in the future; 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 Mr. Kwity Paye.