

2021 -- H 6360

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N

**HONORING AND THANKING COURTNEY E. HAWKINS ON THE OCCASION OF HER
RETIREMENT AS DIRECTOR OF THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN
SERVICES**

Introduced By: Representatives Diaz, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Slater, Ruggiero,
Caldwell, Craven, McEntee, Casimiro, and Shallcross Smith

Date Introduced: May 25, 2021

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, In June of 2017, the people of Rhode Island became the recipients of
2 extensive leadership skills, vast experience, and unalloyed job dedication, when Courtney
3 Hawkins was named Director of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS); and

4 WHEREAS, Ms. Hawkins is a native Rhode Islander. She attended South Kingstown
5 High School and earned her Bachelor's degree at the University of Rhode Island. While attending
6 URI, she interned at the Training School, and upon graduation, taught math at Ocean Tides
7 School. Continuing her education, she received her Masters of Science in Social Work from
8 Columbia University; and

9 WHEREAS, During the infamous 9/11 events, Ms. Hawkins was interning at a social
10 service agency in downtown New York City, and was instrumental in the development and
11 implementation of the City's response to the attack and case management for the victims. She
12 subsequently returned to Rhode Island, and became the first Executive Director of Providence
13 Talks, and later, was named Chief Policy Officer to the Mayor of Providence; and

14 WHEREAS, In the summer of 2017, Director Hawkins began her leadership of the
15 Department of Human Services, and is credited with stabilizing and enhancing the technology
16 system that is used to determine benefits for more than 300,000 Rhode Islanders annually; and

17 WHEREAS, In addition, Director Hawkins has assisted in efforts to stabilize social-
18 service programs and improve customers' experience with the Department, and most recently,
19 successfully advocated for more benefits, services and supports for individuals during the

1 pandemic. She was nationally recognized for the Department's efforts "to prevent COVID-19
2 spread in the State's licensed child care programs while simultaneously improving access and the
3 quality of care given by providers across Rhode Island"; and

4 WHEREAS, Upon her retirement as Director of DHS, Ms. Hawkins leaves a legacy of
5 commitment to the people of this state and to quality public health. Her efforts have had a
6 positive and rewarding impact on the lives of many people, and she is enormously worthy of our
7 emulation and acknowledgement; now, therefore be it

8 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives hereby recognizes and thanks Director
9 Courtney Hawkins for her dedicated efforts on behalf of thousands of vulnerable individuals and
10 families. We moreover thank her for a job well done and extend our sincerest wishes for her
11 continued success and for all the very best that life has to offer; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
13 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Director Courtney E. Hawkins.

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