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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported that in 2010, excessive drinking cost Rhode Island over $886 million, which accounts for $842 per person in Rhode Island. These costs result from losses in workplace productivity, health care expenses, criminal justice expenses, and motor vehicles crashes. About $2 of every $5 of the economic costs of
excessive alcohol use were paid by federal, state, and local governments; and
WHEREAS, Alcohol consumption is the third-leading cause of preventable death in the
United States. The CDC’s Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report states that in Rhode Island
there were approximately 337 alcohol-attributable deaths each year and 27.4 years of life lost per
alcohol-attributable death from 2011-2015; and
WHEREAS, Emergency Department visit-related diagnoses increased by 47 percent for
both men and women from 2006-2014, and the costs for such visits increased from $4.1 billion to
$15.3 billion in the same time period. In 2020, alcohol-related disorders were the 4th most
common reason, among all Rhode Islanders, for a visit to a Rhode Island emergency department;
and
WHEREAS, The COVID-19 pandemic and its associated effects have led to elevated
levels of harmful substance use, including an increase in alcohol use and related consequences.
The dangers of excessive alcohol use should not be ignored; and
WHEREAS, According to the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) International, average
drinks per day and binge drinking increased from February 2020 to April 2020; and
WHEREAS, A 2020 study funded by the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and
Alcoholism found overall increases in alcohol consumption among adults, including a 41 percent
increase in heavy drinking among women; and
WHEREAS, Some hospital systems nationally have noted increases in admissions for
alcohol-related liver disease during the pandemic ranging from 30 percent to 50 percent higher
than previous years; and
WHEREAS, Meeting people where they are in their recovery journey is a critical
component of public health and every setting of care should be aware of the signs of dangerous
alcohol use, trained in assessing and/or identifying AUD, and treating AUD; and
WHEREAS, In December of 2020, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021
(P.L.116-260) was enacted, which included $1.65 billion in the supplemental Substance Abuse
Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant funding as provided as part of the law’s section
dedicated to COVID-19 relief; and
WHEREAS, In March of 2021, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-2) was
enacted, which included $1.5 billion in longer term supplemental SAPT Block Grant funding;
now, therefore be it
RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
proclaims April of 2022, to be "Alcohol Awareness Month"; and be it further
RESOLVED, That this House hereby respectfully requests that the Governor of the State
of Rhode Island, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services, the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals, the Department of Corrections, and the Department of Health consider utilizing the supplemental SAPT Block Grant funding provided by the Consolidated Appropriations Act and the American Rescue Plan for these efforts; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable Daniel McKee, Governor of the State of Rhode Island, Womazetta Jones, MA, Secretary of the Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Patricia A. Coyne-Fague, Esq., Director of the Rhode Island Department of Corrections, the Rhode Island Department of Health, and the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals.

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