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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY ON THE PASSING OF JOHN S. MELLEKAS

Introduced By: Senators Paiva Weed, Raptakis, Algiere, Lombardi, and Ciccone

Date Introduced: June 10, 2015

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, It is with great sadness that this Senate has learned of the passing of John S.
2 Mellekas, the beloved husband of fifty-six years to "the love of his life," Martha Tsopelas, and
3 the devoted father of Vickie Mellekas, Gia and Peter Harrigan, Sofia and John Troy, Stavros and
4 Kimberly Mellekas, and Peter Mellekas. He was also the very proud grandfather of Michael,
5 Christina, Andrew, Cameron, Matthew, Julia, Caroline, Susan and Johnny, and a well-respected
6 longtime resident of the City of Newport; and

7 WHEREAS, Born in Newport on June 14, 1933, Mr. Mellekas was the son of Greek
8 immigrants Stavros and Bessie Mellekas. He was the brother of Ourania Kastritis, Maria
9 Kosmos, and the late James Mellekas; and

10 WHEREAS, After graduating from Rogers High School, Mr. Mellekas attended the
11 University of Arizona on a football scholarship, where he earned his Bachelor's degree in
12 Education. Upon graduation, he became the No. 3 draft choice of the Chicago Bears, and
13 subsequently went on to play professional football in the NFL for the next eight years, playing for
14 the Chicago Bears from 1956 through 1961, the San Francisco Forty-Niners in 1962, and the
15 Philadelphia Eagles in 1963; and

16 WHEREAS, Upon retiring from football, Mr. Mellekas returned to his hometown of
17 Newport and became a Physical Education Teacher with the Newport School Department for the
18 next 35 years, retiring in 1996. In addition, he owned and operated the Kings Row and later the
19 Odyssey Restaurant with his brother-in-law and brother, and was a commissioner for the Newport
20 Housing Authority, a former parish council member at St. Spyridon's church, and a member of

1 the AHEPA; and

2 WHEREAS, Very few men have both the drive and immense talent to play football on
3 the level that Mr. Mellekas did for over a decade, both in college and with the NFL, and over the
4 years he earned myriad awards and honors recognizing his achievements. In 1976, he was
5 inducted into the Providence Gridiron Club Hall of Fame, in 1986, he was inducted into the
6 Hellenic Athletic Hall of Fame, in 2002, he was inducted into the City of Newport Sports Hall of
7 Fame, and in 2008, he was inducted into the Inaugural Rogers High School Athletic Hall of
8 Fame. In addition, in 1974, he received Hugh McGowan Award for his contribution to sports and
9 work with youth of Newport County; and

10 WHEREAS, John Mellekas' passing leaves a tremendous void in the hearts of his
11 beloved family and many friends, and he will be dearly missed; now, therefore be it

12 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
13 hereby offers the family and many friends and admirers of John S. Mellekas sincere condolences
14 on his passing; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
16 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Mrs. Martha Mellekas and Family.

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