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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2018

SENATE RESOLUTION

**COMMEMORATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASSASSINATION OF DR.
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

Introduced By: Senators Metts, Ruggerio, Lombardi, Felag, and P Fogarty

Date Introduced: April 04, 2018

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, On the tragic day of April 4, 1968, our nation suffered a grievous loss when
2 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated on the balcony of his hotel room in Memphis,
3 Tennessee; and

4 WHEREAS, Dr. Martin Luther King was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia,
5 to the Reverend Martin Luther King, Sr., and Alberta Williams King. Dr. King graduated from
6 Booker T. Washington High School where he became known for his public speaking skills and
7 his proficiency in debating. A child of the South, he lived and experienced firsthand the effects of
8 segregation, racism and the injustices of the prevalent Jim Crow laws; and

9 WHEREAS, At the age of 15, Dr. King passed the entrance exam and entered Morehouse
10 College where he graduated in 1948 with a degree in sociology and subsequently enrolled in
11 Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester, Pennsylvania, where he graduated with a Divinity
12 degree in 1951. Dr. King married Coretta Scott in 1953 and later earned a Ph.D. in Systemic
13 Theology from Boston University in 1955. Upon graduation he embarked on a public service
14 career that literally changed the world; and

15 WHEREAS, Dr. King's life from 1955 until his death was one of complete selfless
16 service to the cause of justice. The combination of his powerful oratory skills, incredible
17 charisma, inexhaustible energy, and personal integrity allowed him to hold a mirror up to our
18 nation and remind us that we never fully lived up to the promises of freedom and equality
19 guaranteed in our Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the Declaration of Independence; and

1 WHEREAS, Beginning with Rosa Parks and the successful Montgomery Bus Boycott in
2 1955, to the founding of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957, which organized
3 the African-American churches and their immense moral authority to support and conduct non-
4 violent protests in support of civil rights, to the Birmingham Campaign in protest of racial
5 segregation in Birmingham, Alabama, to the March on Washington and his poetically historic and
6 magnificent "I have a Dream Speech", and on to Selma, Alabama, Dr. King became the face and
7 voice of the American Civil Rights movement; and

8 WHEREAS, Whether Dr. King was talking to Presidents, foreign leaders and dignitaries,
9 or a humble janitor, he always had the same demeanor and his message never veered from the
10 righteous truth of Justice and equality and that God calls all of us to love our neighbors as much
11 as we love ourselves. His message of love, hope, non-violence and racial equality opened the
12 hearts of millions, motivated countless people to devote their lives to the causes of equality and
13 justice and moved a nation to begin the process of taking steps towards becoming a society in
14 which one is truly judged by the content of their character and not the color of their skin. His
15 assassination 50 years ago is as painful today as it was that tragic day on April 4, 1968; now,
16 therefore be it

17 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
18 hereby commemorates the 50th Anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.,
19 and calls on all Rhode Islanders to never waver and to rededicate ourselves to the goals of justice
20 and equality for all; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
22 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Providence Branch NAACP.

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