

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

SENATE RESOLUTION

**EXPRESSING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF JOHN J. (JACK)
LEYDEN**

Introduced By: Senator Maryellen Goodwin

Date Introduced: March 22, 2021

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sadness that this Senate has learned of the passing of John
2 (Jack) Leyden, a revered law enforcement figure who served and protected the people of Rhode
3 Island with integrity and tireless devotion for more than four decades; and

4 WHEREAS, Mr. Leyden was raised in the Smith Hill neighborhood of Providence, the
5 son of Irish immigrants, the late Thomas and Katherine Leyden. He is survived by his five
6 children, Lori Leyden, John Leyden Jr., Retired Major Rhode Island State Police, and his wife,
7 Carlotta, Lynn McKnight and her husband, Brian, Lisa Murray and her husband, Dave, and Leigh
8 Leyden and her fiancé, Doug Posich, and his six grandchildren, Taylor and Lindsey McKnight,
9 John Leyden III, and Shayla, Sara and David Murray, Jr. He was the brother of the late Thomas
10 Leyden, Katherine Lovatt and Martin Leyden; and

11 WHEREAS, Mr. Leyden enlisted in the United States Navy during the Korean War, and
12 served our nation with distinction. Shortly after receiving his honorable discharge, he embarked
13 on a legendary law enforcement career that earned the respect and praise of all who knew him. He
14 became a member of the Providence Police Department and quickly rose through the ranks thanks
15 to his tenacious devotion to duty, tireless work ethic, and abiding integrity. He began his duties
16 as a patrolman walking a beat in South Providence, and later led the Providence Police
17 Department's first Organized Crime Task Force charged with dismantling local racketeering. He
18 worked on numerous complicated high-profile investigations including the "Innis case" which led
19 to the 1975 murder conviction of Thomas Innis. The case was appealed to the United States

1 Supreme Court which resulted in the conviction being upheld and significantly defined the scope
2 of 5th Amendment Miranda Rights; and

3 WHEREAS, Mr. Leyden graduated from the 87th FBI National Academy and retired
4 from the Providence Police Department with the rank of Major. In 1984, he was appointed Chief
5 of the North Kingstown Police Department, a position he held for nine years until his
6 appointment as a United States Marshal by President Clinton thanks in large part to his being
7 nominated by the Late Senator Claiborne Pell. When he received this prestigious appointment,
8 Senator Jack Reed said that “Jack Leyden embodies integrity, courage, and the spirit of
9 community, and has a compassionate heart as well”; and

10 WHEREAS, Until being benched by his doctors, Mr. Leyden was a dedicated athlete who
11 enjoyed playing competitive basketball, racquetball, golf and tennis well into his 80’s. He was a
12 devout Catholic and communicant of Saint Bernard Church, and belonged to and supported many
13 community and charitable organizations. He was a member of the Sons of Irish Kings, and was
14 always deeply proud of his Irish Heritage. He served as President of the Rhode Island Police
15 Chiefs Association, and as Secretary of the National Police Chiefs Association. He earned an
16 Associate’s degree in Criminal Justice from Roger Williams University; and

17 WHEREAS, Mr. Leyden will be long-remembered for his remarkable law enforcement
18 career. His honesty, integrity and devotion to duty were attributes that were widely recognized
19 and admired by all who knew him and worked with him. The love he had for his family was
20 limitless and his spirit will live on forever in the hearts of his loved ones; now, therefore be it

21 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby expresses our
22 gratitude for his devoted service to the state of Rhode Island, and our deepest condolences to the
23 Leyden Family on the passing of John Leyden; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
25 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Lori Leyden, John Leyden, Jr., Retired Major,
26 Rhode Island State Police, Lynn McKnight, Lisa Murray and Leigh Leyden.

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