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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

SENATE RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING THAT THE JAPANESE IMPERIAL ARMED FORCES COERCED MANY WOMEN, ESPECIALLY KOREAN WOMEN, INTO SEXUAL SLAVERY DURING ITS OCCUPATION OF MOST OF ASIA AND MANY PACIFIC ISLANDS FROM THE 1930S TO THE END OF WORLD WAR II

Introduced By: Senator Michael J. McCaffrey

Date Introduced: June 08, 2021

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, From the 1930s to the end of the Second World War, the Government of
2 Japan officially commissioned and coerced the acquisition of young women for the purpose of
3 sexual servitude. These women became known as "comfort women," a euphemism for prostitutes;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, It is estimated by historians that anywhere from 50,000 to 200,000 women
6 were involved against their will as "comfort women." These women came from throughout Asia
7 and the Asian-Pacific Islands under Japanese control, including most particularly Korea, as well
8 as China, Philippines, Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, Vietnam and elsewhere; and

9 WHEREAS, In 1921, the Government of Japan signed the International Convention for
10 the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children; and

11 WHEREAS, In 1993 the Japanese Government issued the "Kono Statement" in which it
12 admitted that coercion was involved in the seizing of the "comfort women" and apologized for
13 those actions, and in 2015, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe "...expressed his most sincere
14 apologies and remorse to all the women and acknowledged that they had undergone
15 immeasurable and painful experiences and suffered incurable physical and psychological wounds
16 as comfort women"; and

17 WHEREAS, Unfortunately, misinformation and denial continues to conflict with the
18 overwhelming historical consensus and evidence that thousands of women were forced to serve

1 as sexual slaves by the Japanese Imperial Army from the 1930s to the end of World War II. One
2 such ill-informed and inaccurate article was recently written by Harvard Law Professor J. Mark
3 Ramseyer, who essentially argued that the "comfort women" were independent and consenting
4 prostitutes. The response was immediate and the article was resoundingly discredited by most
5 scholars and strenuously objected to by numerous activists, political leaders and students; now,
6 therefore be it

7 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby recognizes that the
8 Japanese Imperial Army coerced many women, especially Korean women, into sexual slavery
9 during its occupation of most of Asia and many Pacific Islands from the 1930s to the end of
10 World War II; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
12 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable President of the United States,
13 Joseph Biden, the Honorable Governor of the State of Rhode Island, Daniel McKee, and Mr. Jin
14 Sup Hong, Grand Master, Hong's World Class Taekwondo Center.

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