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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2021

SENATE RESOLUTION

CONGRATULATING RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR JANET COIT ON HER NEW POSITION WITH THE UNITED
STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND THANKING HER FOR HER SERVICE
AND MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT DEM ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE OF RHODE
ISLAND

Introduced By: Senators Sosnowski, Ruggerio, McCaffrey, Goodwin, Euer, and Miller

Date Introduced: June 22, 2021

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, Department of Environmental Management Director Janet Coit has been a
2 champion for the environment her entire life. Director Coit is a graduate, magna cum laude, of
3 Dartmouth College and earned her Juris Doctor degree from Stanford Law School where she was
4 President of the Environmental Law Society and a member of the Environmental Law Journal.
5 Her passionate advocacy for the environment continued with her work at the Department of the
6 Interior and Department of Justice, acting as environmental coordinator for Senator John Chafee
7 and Senator Lincoln Chafee, as well as serving as Counsel to the United States Committee on the
8 Environment and Public Works; and

9 WHEREAS, Director Coit moved to Rhode Island in 1997 and worked for ten years as
10 the State Director for the Nature Conservancy, one of the world's most important environmental
11 nonprofits. Under her guidance, the Nature Conservancy oversaw some of Rhode Island's largest
12 land conservation projects; and

13 WHEREAS, Appointed Director of the Rhode Island Department of Environmental
14 Management in 2011, for more than ten years she has earned wide praise and respect for her
15 diligent efforts to protect Narragansett Bay, improve water quality, address the needs of the State
16 Park System and confront climate change; and

17 WHEREAS, Director Coit has chaired the Executive Climate Change Coordinating
18 Council since its inception, and has worked tirelessly to promote clean energy, reduce emissions

1 and implement plans to make Rhode Island more resilient to the grave environmental impacts that
2 are being caused by climate change. Thanks to her leadership, Rhode Island has implemented
3 new grant programs for the remediation and reuse of contaminated sites; and

4 WHEREAS, Under Director Coit’s direction and guidance, vast improvements have been
5 made within Rhode Island’s State Park System, which receives more than nine million visitors
6 each year. Staffing has been improved, a new pavilion was built at East Matunuck State Beach,
7 and new boat ramps and recreational fishing improvements were installed in Narragansett and
8 Goddard Park. Other improvements have included greater public access to parks, waterways and
9 nature; and

10 WHEREAS, Director Coit has worked successfully with three Rhode Island Governors
11 and the General Assembly to promote green bonds every two years, and the electorate has voted
12 overwhelmingly in support of tens of millions of dollars to increase open space, farmland
13 preservation, water quality and recreational improvements, and to better safeguard and protect the
14 natural wonders that bless the Ocean State; and

15 WHEREAS, Director Coit has received numerous honors and awards in recognition of
16 her outstanding stewardship of Rhode Island’s environment. Most recently, she received the New
17 England Women in Energy and the Environment’s Achievement Award, and the Gary S. Sasse
18 Distinguished Public Service Award from the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council. Last
19 year, Director Coit received an honorary degree from Roger Williams University School of Law.
20 She was also inducted into the American College of Environmental Lawyers and received the
21 Environmental Business Council Paul G. Keough Environmental-Energy Award for Government
22 Service; and

23 WHEREAS, Director Coit played a vital role in attracting the Volvo Ocean Race
24 Newport Stopover event in 2015, which drew more than 130,000 fans and brought \$47 million
25 into the local economy. In recognition of her tireless work to bring this event to Newport,
26 Director Coit received the “Mary Brennan Tourism Award” from the Rhode Island Hospitality
27 Association. The race returned to Newport in 2018, featuring the theme “Turn the Tide on
28 Plastics,” and included the fourth annual Ocean Summit; and

29 WHEREAS, Other distinguished awards received by Director Coit include Sail
30 Newport’s President’s Award and the Annual Leadership Award from the Rhode Island Saltwater
31 Anglers Association, both given in 2015. She was recognized as one of Rhode Island’s most
32 powerful women by Rhode Island Monthly in 2014, and received the “John H. Chaffee
33 Conservation Leadership Award” from the Environmental Council of Rhode Island. She was
34 named “Boater of the Year” by the Rhode Island Marines Trades Association in 2013, and is a

1 recipient of the "Salomon Award" from the Wood-Pawcatuck Watershed Association; now,
2 therefore be it

3 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby thanks Director Janet
4 Coit for her many years of distinguished and tireless service to the State of Rhode Island and her
5 support in protecting the environment. She has accomplished much in the important fight against
6 climate change, and has improved the lives of all Rhode Islanders by safeguarding and improving
7 the natural wonders of our Ocean State; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby wishes Director Coit much success in her new
9 duties with the United States Department of Commerce; and be it further

10 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
11 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Director Janet Coit, Rhode Island Department
12 of Environment Management.

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