

2022 -- H 8374

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

HOUSE RESOLUTION

HONORING AND THANKING LEADER BLAKE FILIPPI FOR HIS SERVICE TO THE
PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Chippendale, Shekarchi, Newberry, Place, Price,
Nardone, Roberts, Quattrocchi, Fenton-Fung, and Blazejewski

Date Introduced: June 23, 2022

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Blake Filippi was born in 1980, and spent the first 18 years of his life
2 working his family's cattle farm in Lincoln, Rhode Island, and also helping to run his family's
3 Block Island seasonal businesses; and

4 WHEREAS, From a young age, Mr. Filippi enjoyed a deep connection to animals, and
5 worked as an equine trail guide through Block Island's beautiful nature preserves; and

6 WHEREAS, Mr. Filippi's love of nature continues to inspire him towards outdoor
7 adventures, from climbing volcanos to trekking though jungles; and

8 WHEREAS, Soon after graduation from Lincoln High School in 1999, Mr. Filippi
9 headed west to the University of Arizona to study history and astronomy; and

10 WHEREAS, In 2001, Mr. Filippi participated in the Semester at Sea program,
11 circumnavigating the globe on a steamship and meeting with national dignitaries, including Fidel
12 Castro; and

13 WHEREAS, Mr. Filippi then attended Rutgers University School of Law-Camden where
14 he developed a deep appreciation for the power of the law as a force for good and evil; and

15 WHEREAS, Mr. Filippi subsequently returned to Rhode Island to serve in the Rhode
16 Island Supreme Court Law Clerk Department, and learned to write; and

17 WHEREAS, After serving as a legal analyst for the Tenth Amendment Center, a national
18 think tank dedicated to local sovereignty and the preservation of individual liberties, Blake Filippi
19 ran to represent Block Island, Charlestown, South Kingstown and Westerly in the House of

1 Representatives, winning his first election in November of 2014; and

2 WHEREAS, Blake Filippi was inspired to enter public service by the work of his
3 deceased father, Paul Filippi, a civil rights leader who opened the famed Celebrity Club in
4 Randall Square, Providence, Rhode Island, which became the first integrated jazz venue in New
5 England, and hosted musical greats such as Sarah Vaughn, Louis Armstrong, Nat King Cole, Ella
6 Fitzgerald, Ray Charles, Billie Holiday, and Sammy Davis Jr.; and

7 WHEREAS, Paul Filippi's struggle to help integrate Rhode Island taught Blake that we
8 must stand tall for our beliefs, especially when they are unpopular, and this has guided his tenure
9 in the House of Representatives; and

10 WHEREAS, In January of 2015, Blake Filippi entered elected office and had an
11 immediate impact on the House Minority Caucus with his energy, ideas and love of our republic,
12 and also compelled many members of the House at large to compassionately and logically rethink
13 previously held political positions on myriad issues; and

14 WHEREAS, Representative Filippi served on the House Committee on Environment and
15 Natural Resources, the Committee on Judiciary, the Committee on Oversight, the Committee on
16 Municipal Government and the Rhode Island Lottery Commission in addition to several special
17 House Commissions, and has always been an active, contributing member of the legislative or
18 oversight processes of these important committees, and has doggedly sought answers and
19 solutions from anyone appearing before these committees; and

20 WHEREAS, In 2017, Representative Filippi was elected to the post of House Minority
21 Whip and soon ascended to House Minority Leader in 2019. During his tenure as Leader, he was
22 responsible for leading the holistic changes within the House Minority Office's organizational
23 chart and inner workings which resulted in transformative and positive changes to every element
24 of the Minority Caucus's impact in the political arena and thereby set the standard by which all
25 future Minority Leaders will be measured; and

26 WHEREAS, Leader Filippi led his caucus mates with honor, loyalty, humility and an
27 unrelenting hunger for continuous improvement in the caucus' political and legislative approach,
28 and overall approach to community engagement, which has resulted in forging strong bonds
29 within all political corners of the state, including and most importantly among minority
30 communities and businesses; and

31 WHEREAS, As any true leader would, Leader Filippi has led by example, never
32 displaying an aversion to tackling difficult issues wherever they were found, and earning the
33 reverence of not only the Minority Caucus, but of Republicans and Democrats alike across our
34 state and nation because the "spirit of compromise" has always been an element of the political

1 process that he felt was losing importance and rightfully needed to be embraced by all policy
2 makers, and never dismissed; and

3 WHEREAS, Leader Filippi's love and deep respect for our Republic and our Constitution
4 have compelled him to view every issue through that prism, and he has consistently sought to
5 bring perspective to issues that were both imperative and constructive in order for members of the
6 House to craft better-informed policy positions; and

7 WHEREAS, Leader Filippi's style of passionately engaging in floor debates, often in a
8 very animated fashion, have made his presentations even more compelling and have enabled him
9 to capture the attention of so many elected officials, aspiring elected officials, as well as citizens
10 across the State of Rhode Island, and have proven that passion is an integral part of being an
11 effective elected leader; and

12 WHEREAS, Blake Anthony Filippi has served the people of Block Island (New
13 Shoreham), Charlestown, South Kingstown and Westerly – as well as the entire state, for eight
14 years with honor and dignity; now, therefore be it

15 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
16 wishes Blake Filippi the very best in all his future endeavors; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
18 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Honorable Blake Filippi.

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