

2024 -- H 8053

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2024

HOUSE RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF THE HONORABLE DEBORAH J.
KELSO

Introduced By: Representatives Shanley, Tanzi, Shekarchi, Blazjewski, Place,
Kennedy, O'Brien, Batista, Fogarty, and McEntee

Date Introduced: March 12, 2024

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, It is with deep sadness that this House of Representatives has learned of the
2 passing of Deborah J. Kelso of Wakefield. She was born in Warwick and was the beloved wife of
3 the late Honorable James A. Kelso, a former member of the Rhode Island House of
4 Representatives; and

5 WHEREAS, Deborah Kelso graduated from the University of Rhode Island with a degree
6 in journalism, a field that helped prepare her for important discussions on the vexing issues of the
7 day, and effectively amplify her voice in support of various causes, which she successfully did
8 throughout her life; and

9 WHEREAS, Mrs. Kelso was a hardworking woman who strove daily to provide for her
10 family and loved ones. She worked most of her professional career as the managing partner of the
11 Coast Guard House Restaurant before she accepted the position as the Director of the
12 Narragansett Chamber of Commerce; and

13 WHEREAS, To the good fortune of the citizens of South Kingstown, Deborah Kelso was
14 elected to two terms on the South Kingstown Town Council where she served with abiding
15 integrity and shined a light on the important issues the Town was facing; and

16 WHEREAS, Mrs. Kelso was heavily involved in civic affairs for her entire life and was
17 always giving back to the community. She was a member of the Narragansett Lions Club for
18 many years, and was an elected member of the Rhode Island Democratic Committee. She was a
19 tireless advocate in support of social justice causes and believed in true equality for everyone; and

1 WHEREAS, Deborah Kelso leaves behind her children, Carrie Kelly and her husband,
2 Zachary Saul, Erica Breault and her husband, David, and Andrew Jennings, and her
3 grandchildren, Ava Mongillo, and Brooks Saul. She also leaves behind her siblings, Susan
4 Salisbury and her husband, Lee, Dottie Santagata, Steven Gray and his wife, Maureen, and
5 Robert Gray, as well as her best friend, Toni Owens and her husband, Andy. She is also survived
6 by many nieces and nephews, and was preceded in death by her husband, the Honorable James
7 M. Kelso, her brother Wilton Gray, and her sister, Judy Emrick and her husband, Corky; now,
8 therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
10 expresses its condolences on the passing of the Honorable Deborah J. Kelso; 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 resolutions to Carrie Kelly, Erica Breault and Andrew Jennings.

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