

2015 -- H 6326

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LC002902
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N

**CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CREATION OF A SAFE AND
SUSTAINABLE WATER SUPPLY FOR THE RESIDENTS OF OUR STATE AND THE
ORIGINS OF PROVIDENCE WATER, THE LARGEST WATER UTILITY IN RHODE
ISLAND**

Introduced By: Representatives Marcello, Lima, Williams, Almeida, and McKiernan

Date Introduced: June 18, 2015

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, In 1636, when Roger Williams founded Providence, the only available
2 drinking water was derived from private wells. By 1773, a fountain society had formed which
3 supplied water to Providence through a system of underground hollowed out logs; and

4 WHEREAS, In the early 1800's, as the population began to grow, Providence's City
5 Council sought to locate a reliable water supply source. Until the early 1900's, water was
6 pumped, without any purification treatment, directly from the Pawtuxet River at Pettaconsett in
7 the City of Cranston; and

8 WHEREAS, By 1913, a committee was formed to remedy the situation and develop a
9 stable water supply source and distribution system. Shortly thereafter, the committee determined
10 that the head of the North Branch Pawtuxet River and its two main tributaries were the best
11 potential source, and in 1915, the Rhode Island General Assembly, recognizing water to be an
12 essential and valuable resource to our state, passed enabling legislation to allow for the
13 construction of a reservoir and related public water supply system for the City of Providence; and

14 WHEREAS, In 1926, it was decided that a new modern water supply system needed to
15 be developed and the construction of a large reservoir and treatment plant on the North Branch of
16 the Pawtuxet River in the Town of Scituate commenced. In September of 1926, the main Scituate
17 reservoir was formed by the construction of a dam across the Pawtuxet River, and an aqueduct
18 from the dam fed the nearby treatment plant; and

1 WHEREAS, The construction of the Scituate Reservoir caused the demolition of 1,195
2 buildings including 375 homes, 233 barns, 7 schools, 6 churches, 11 ice houses, 5 halls, 30 dairy
3 farms, and the deconstruction of the Providence and Danielson Railway; and

4 WHEREAS, As a result of the demolition and construction, the Villages of Rockland,
5 Ashland, South Scituate, Richmond, and Kent ceased to exist and now lay under the waters of the
6 Scituate Reservoir; and

7 WHEREAS, At the time, the treatment plant and its filtration system were among the
8 most technologically advanced in the country and considered state-of-the-art. In the 1940's and
9 again in the 1960's, due to ever-increasing demand, the treatment plant underwent major
10 expansions and renovations; and

11 WHEREAS, Today, Providence Water, which is owned and operated by the City of
12 Providence, is the largest water utility in Rhode Island. Its system provides water to 600,000
13 consumers, and consists of the main Scituate Reservoir supply and its five tributary reservoirs. Its
14 plant has a maximum treatment capacity of 144 million gallons of water per day and still remains
15 the largest capacity conventional treatment facility in New England; and

16 WHEREAS, The sacrifices made by the residents of Scituate more than 100 years ago
17 benefited the whole of the City of Providence, and currently, benefit 60 percent of all the water
18 consumers in our state. Their sacrifices not only resulted in a pure, plentiful, and potable water
19 supply, but also provided a pristine and idyllic environment for the Town of Scituate's current
20 residents; now, therefore be it

21 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and
22 Providence Plantations hereby celebrates the 100th Anniversary of the creation of a safe and
23 sustainable water supply for the residents of our state and the origins of Providence Water, and
24 commemorates the sacrifices made by the people of the Town of Scituate; and be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
26 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Xaykham Khamsyvoravong, Chairperson of the
27 Board of Directors for Providence Water, members of the Scituate Town Council, and the
28 Scituate Town Clerk.

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