



April 5, 2023

The Honorable Karen Alzate
Chairwoman, House Committee on Special Legislation
House Lounge, Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: H 5380 and H 5762

Dear Chairwoman Alzate,

I am writing to express my support for H 5380 and H 5762, Acts Relating to Holidays and Days of Special Observance. Establishing state holidays to celebrate “Juneteenth National Freedom Day” and the last day of Ramadan in accordance with the Islamic calendar recognizes holidays that are important culturally and religiously for people across our state.

Juneteenth is a day of remembrance in honor of the news of the legal end of slavery spreading through the United States. As a state holiday, Juneteenth would demonstrate a deep reflection and understanding on freedom and equity for all its residents. In 2021, Juneteenth was established as an official federal holiday. Rhode Island would join Massachusetts, New York, Maine, Maryland, Virginia, Illinois, Texas, and more in establishing Juneteenth as a state holiday.

State recognition of the last day of Ramadan—or “Eid al-Fitr” in Arabic—acknowledges an important holiday for the growing Islamic community in our state. The ending of Ramadan is about celebrating together in unity, emphasizes good deeds, and gratitude, values that all add positively to the Rhode Island community.

Establishing Juneteenth and the last day of Ramadan as state holidays fosters an inclusive community grounded in respect and appreciation for Rhode Island’s diverse population. I hope you will join me in supporting H 5380 and H 5762.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sabina Matos". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Sabina Matos
Lieutenant Governor
State of Rhode Island

CC: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Special Legislation
The Honorable Karen Alzate and Enrique Sanchez
Nicole McCarty, Esq.