

**SENSE OF THE BOARD RESOLUTION
REMEMBERING ELLA T. GRASSO, CONNECTICUT'S FIRST WOMAN GOVERNOR,
ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF HER BIRTH**

WHEREAS, Ella T. Grasso was elected governor of Connecticut in 1974, the first woman in the nation to be elected governor in her own right; and

WHEREAS, Ella Grasso was born on May 10, 1919, in Windsor Locks, CT. She attended St. Mary's School, won a scholarship to the Chaffee School and then attended Mount Holyoke College, where she graduated *magna cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa in 1940, majoring in economics and sociology; she earned a Master's degree from Mount Holyoke in 1942 and later received honorary degrees from Colgate University, University of Hartford, Trinity College and Smith College; and .

WHEREAS, after graduating in 1942, she married Thomas Grasso, a schoolteacher and principal, and had two children; and

WHEREAS, Ella Grasso's political career began in 1942, when she joined the League of Women Voters; one year later she began working for the Connecticut Democratic Party as a speechwriter. In 1952, she was elected to the Connecticut General Assembly and served there until 1957, becoming the first woman elected Floor Leader in 1955; during her service in the state legislature, Grasso fought for equal rights and a law forbidding housing discrimination; from 1958 to 1970 she served as Connecticut's Secretary of the State, and became the first woman to chair the Democratic State Platform Committee. In 1970, she was elected to her first of two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives. While in Congress she served on the Education and Labor Committee and the Veterans' Affairs Committee; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, Ella Grasso re-entered state politics and was elected governor by a margin of more than 200,000 votes; and was re-elected in 1978. Over the course of her tenure as governor, Grasso's leadership was tested in the face of fiscal problems, state layoffs and budget shortfalls; she is remembered for staying at the State Armory around the clock, directing emergency operations and making frequent television appearances during the great Blizzard of 1978; In December, 1980 Ella Grasso resigned as governor due to ill health after her diagnosis with ovarian cancer and passed away on February 5, 1981; and

WHEREAS, Ella Grasso paved the way for women to become involved in politics; and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Ronald Reagan posthumously in 1981, and she was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1993.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the 30th Stamford Board of Representatives, remembers Ella T. Grasso, Connecticut's first woman governor, on the 100th anniversary of her birth.

*Approved by the 30th Board of Representatives
This 6th day of November, 2019*

Matthew Quinones, President
30th Board of Representatives

Susan Nabel, Clerk
30th Board of Representatives