

1 THE CITY OF CRANSTON  
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4 **RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

5 **REQUESTING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY CONSIDER SWIFT ACTION TO CHANGE**  
6 **THE DATE OF THE SEPTEMBER 2026 RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PRIMARY**  
7 **ELECTION DUE TO CONCERNS REGARDING THE LABOR DAY HOLIDAY**

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9  
10 **No.**

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12 *Passed:*

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**Daniel R. Wall, Council President**

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17 **WHEREAS**, under current state law, the 2026 Rhode Island Statewide Primary Election is  
18 scheduled to be held on September 8, 2026, which is the day immediately following Labor Day, a  
19 major state and federal holiday; and

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21 **WHEREAS**, in the City of Cranston, 26 polling locations will need to be set up and prepared by  
22 work crews from seven different city departments for 15 hours on Labor Day, adding significantly  
23 to the City's election costs and creating numerous logistical complications due to the inaccessibility  
24 of some polling locations, and unavailability of sufficient personnel on a holiday weekend; and

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26 **WHEREAS**, these costs and logistical problems will be exacerbated on a statewide basis across all  
27 39 cities and towns, including over 400 polling locations, possibly costing an additional \$200,000  
28 for municipalities, which has caused town clerks and election directors, and the full Rhode Island  
29 Town and City Clerks' Association, to request a legislative change to mitigate these issues; and

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31 **WHEREAS**, the deadline for early voting to end, as well as the emergency mail ballot application  
32 deadline, which are typically at 4 p.m. on the day prior to every election, will, due to an  
33 irreconcilable conflict in the state's uniform deadlines statute, instead fall on the day of the primary  
34 itself. This has resulted in serious concerns from Rhode Island's local election officials regarding  
35 their logistical capability to administer both the early voting process and simultaneously operate  
36 regular polling locations, many of which are located in the same physical spaces as early voting  
37 sites, including Cranston's Peter T. Pastore, Jr. Youth Center, which may confuse voters and  
38 severely complicate the efficient conduct of the September Primary; and

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40 **WHEREAS**, because early voting will take place on the same day as the Primary, all 39 cities and  
41 towns, including Cranston, will need to recruit, hire, train, and pay additional poll workers in order  
42 to conduct both legally mandated processes simultaneously; and

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44 **WHEREAS**, because of these and other serious concerns, the Cranston Board of Canvassers voted  
45 unanimously on January 8, 2026 to officially support legislation to move the 2026 Statewide  
46 Primary Election one (1) day, to the Wednesday following Labor Day, which would mitigate these  
47 serious cost, logistical, operational, and staffing concerns; and

48 **WHEREAS**, the state Board of Elections, in response to concerns received from multiple  
49 municipalities, including Cranston, voted unanimously on January 13, 2026, to support the request  
50 to the General Assembly to consider legislation changing the date of the 2026 Statewide Primary  
51 Election to Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2026; and

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53 **WHEREAS**, Rhode Island Secretary of State Gregg M. Amore, the state’s Chief Elections Official  
54 under the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA), is on record as supporting a change in the date  
55 of the 2026 Statewide Primary Election to Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2026, provided such a change is  
56 enacted by the General Assembly early enough in the legislative session in order to provide  
57 adequate time for effective voter and candidate communications; and

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59 **WHEREAS**, both the Rhode Island Town and City Clerks’ Association and Rhode Island League  
60 of Cities and Towns are each on record in supporting a change in the date of the September Primary  
61 due to the Labor Day issue when this matter has been debated in past legislative sessions; and

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63 **WHEREAS**, existing state law already provides for primaries to be held on Wednesdays due to  
64 religious holidays, which last occurred in September 2018, a statewide primary that was held on a  
65 Wednesday successfully, with no noted detrimental impact for voters; and

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67 **WHEREAS**, Rhode Island and Massachusetts have among the latest primaries in the United States,  
68 however, the Massachusetts Legislature enacted a bill in September 2025 changing the date of their  
69 primary, in part due to the same Labor Day concerns, stating it was “necessary for the immediate  
70 preservation of the public convenience” and for the “orderly administration” of the election.

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72 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Honorable Cranston City Council hereby  
73 agrees with the serious concerns raised by Cranston’s Board of Canvassers and state and local  
74 election officials throughout Rhode Island, and supports the effort to change the date of the 2026  
75 Statewide Primary Election to Wednesday, Sept. 9, 2026; and be it further

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77 **RESOLVED**, that the Cranston City Council urges immediate consideration and passage of  
78 legislation anticipated to be introduced to address the date of the 2026 Statewide Primary Election,  
79 and future years’ primaries where the election would fall on the day following Labor Day; and be it  
80 further

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82 **RESOLVED**, that the Cranston City Council respectfully requests the General Assembly consider  
83 and enact this date change in Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, and that all Cranston  
84 Representatives and Senators work diligently to support passage of this change; and be it further

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86 **RESOLVED**, that the City Clerk forward a copy of this Resolution to the Hon. Speaker of the  
87 House of Representatives, the Hon. Senate President, the Hon. Majority and Minority Leaders of  
88 the House and Senate, the Hon. Chairperson of the House State Government and Elections  
89 Committee, the Hon. Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Judiciary, and to all Hon.  
90 Representatives and Senators who represent the City of Cranston.

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93 Sponsored by: Council President Daniel Wall and Council Minority Leader Richard Campopiano

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95 Referred to Ordinance Committee February 4, 2026