

Jan. 11, 2019

Legislative Press Bureau at (401) 528-1743

## THIS WEEK AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

STATE HOUSE — Here are the highlights from news and events that took place in the General Assembly this week. For more information on any of these items visit <http://www.rilegislature.gov/pressrelease>



- **Legislation introduced to expand personal finance education in public schools**  
Sen. Sandra Cano (D-Dist. 8, Pawtucket) and Rep. Joseph McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston), at the behest of General Treasurer Seth Magaziner, introduced legislation ([2019-H 5033](#)) that will expand the teaching of personal finance in Rhode Island's public high schools. The legislation would require all public high schools to offer a class that includes personal finance beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, and would require students to demonstrate proficiency in personal finance by the 2021-2022 school year.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. McNamara submits school reform, attendance bills**  
Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) has introduced legislation ([2019-H 5008](#)) that would nurture the development of new statewide academic standards that would be aligned with a common curriculum. He also introduced a bill ([2019-H 5009](#)) that would create attendance review teams in districts and schools where an absenteeism problem has been identified.  
[Click here to see standards release.](#)  
[Click here to see attendance release.](#)
- **Rep. Solomon bill would prohibit development on State House grounds**  
Rep. Joseph J. Solomon Jr. (D-Dist. 22, Warwick) has again submitted legislation that would preserve the history and open space of the State House grounds. The bill ([2019-H 5041](#)) would prohibit the development of any land contiguous to the State House unless approved by the General Assembly.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)

More...

- **Legislation would mandate the creation of a Text-to-911 emergency system**  
Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) has introduced legislation that would allow Rhode Islanders to text emergencies to 9-1-1. The bill ([2019-H 5045](#)) would direct the E-911 Uniform Emergency Telephone Number Division to establish a single central statewide text-to-911 emergency system compatible with the present emergency telephone number system.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Sen. Raptakis to resubmit line-item veto inspector general bills**  
Sen. Leonidas P. Raptakis (D-Dist. 33, Coventry, West Greenwich, East Greenwich) will be reintroducing two pieces of legislation that would establish an Office of Inspector General and give voters the chance to vote on a constitutional amendment granting the governor the power to utilize a line-item veto in the state budget.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Millea introduces bill that caps classroom size to 20 for grades K-2**  
Rep. Christopher T. Millea (D-Dist. 16, Cranston) has introduced legislation ([2019-H 5047](#)) that would mandate public school classroom sizes be limited to 20 students for kindergarten through grade two classes. Exceptions to the class size limit could be made for emergencies and temporary situations that do not exceed more than three days. Mid-year enrollments when it would be impractical, educationally unsound, or disruptive to student learning to not assign the student to an existing class of maximum size are also classified under exceptions to the proposed legislation.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Speaker Mattiello, President Ruggerio attend Small Business Economic Summit**  
Speaker Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) and Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) attended the Rhode Island Small Business Economic Summit at Bryant University's Student Center. It was an opportunity to hear directly from small business owners and advocates about the various issues and challenges that confront them. Seven groups met to cover the topics of tax and budget, health care, economic development, Main Street issues, workforce development, regulations, and emerging markets.
- **Rep. Edwards selected for opioid policy fellows program**  
House Majority Whip John G. Edwards (D-Dist. 70, Portsmouth, Tiverton) has been selected as a 2019 Opioid Policy Fellow for the National Conference of State Legislatures. The Opioid Policy Fellows Program focuses on health policies and programs being addressed throughout the country, among them being the strengthening of prescription drug monitoring programs, developing prescribing guidelines, increasing naloxone access, and supporting access to treatment and recovery services.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Sen. Euer, Rep. Carson part of national effort to block offshore drilling**  
Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) and Rep. Lauren H. Carson (D-Dist. 75, Newport) joined legislators from seven other states in a united effort to protect our coasts by announcing legislation that they will file to ban drilling off

Rhode Island's shore. The legislation would limit any new offshore drilling capabilities off Rhode Island's coasts.

[Click here to see news release.](#)

▪ **Senate Finance Committee has first meeting, hears auditing presentation**

The Senate Finance Committee met to hear a presentation on state agency performance management and financial auditing. The panel heard an overview on audit processes and reports from Auditor General Dennis Hoyle. It was followed by a presentation from Dorothy Pasquale, chief of the Office of Internal Audit in the Office of Management and Budget, and Joseph Codega, director of the Office of Performance Management for OMB. The Committee will include audit findings and performance metrics as part of the agency budget review process.

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