

Jan. 25, 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>



- **Rep. McNamara, Sen. McCaffrey bill would force utilities to repave roads**
Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) and Senate Majority Leader Michael J. McCaffrey (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) have introduced the Rhode Island Utility Fair Share Roadway Repair Act. The bill ([2019-H 5028](#)) would require public utilities to repave and repair roadways which have been altered or excavated by the public utility.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Caldwell's first bill would post opioid warning signs at all pharmacies**
Rep. Justine Caldwell (D-Dist. 30, East Greenwich, West Greenwich) submitted legislation ([2019-H 5184](#)) to require opioid warning signs at pharmacies, similar to those for tobacco products, to ensure that customers are aware of the possible dangers connected with opioids when they fill prescriptions for them.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Sen. Felag bill would end 'budget scoops' from quasi-public corporations**
Sen. Walter S. Felag (D-Dist. 10, Warren, Bristol, Tiverton) has reintroduced legislation ([2019-S 0120](#)) that would end the practice of "scooping" money from the budgets of the state's quasi-public corporations, such as the Narragansett Bay Commission, for the purpose of balancing the state budget. The legislation mandates that quasi-public corporations limit the use of all funds and property to only perform the function or service for which the quasi-public corporation was created. The legislation also prohibits the transfer or reallocation of funds held by a quasi-public corporation.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

More...

- **Rep. McEntee bill would amend statute of limitations for childhood sexual abuse**
Rep. Carol Hagan McEntee (D-Dist. 33, South Kingstown, Narragansett) has reintroduced legislation ([2019-H 5171](#)) that amends the state's civil statute of limitations for childhood sexual abuse. More specifically, the legislation extends the statute of limitations for childhood sex abuse claims to 35 years. Currently, the statute of limitations is seven years in Rhode Island.

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- **Republicans submit inspector general, line-item veto bills**
Republicans in the Senate and the House announced bills to give the governor line-item veto power and to create an Office of the Inspector General to root out state government waste and fraud. The bills ([2019-S 0177](#), [2019-S 0176](#)) are sponsored in the Senate by Minority Leader Dennis L. Algiere (R-Dist. 38, Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown) and cosponsored by the entire Senate Republican Caucus. Similar legislation ([2019-H 5205](#), [2019-H 5206](#)) has been introduced in the House by Rep. John W. Lyle Jr. (R-Dist. 46, Lincoln, Pawtucket).

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

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

- **House of Representatives adds Conduct, Special Legislation committees**
The House of Representatives has added two new standing committees. Speaker of the House Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) has appointed Rep. Mia Ackerman (D-Dist. 45, Cumberland, Lincoln) to chair the Committee on Conduct, which is tasked with policing the ethical conduct of members of the House of Representatives. It reviews complaints against House members, holds hearing and makes recommendations. Rep. Stephen M. Casey (D-Dist. 50, Woonsocket) will chair the Special Legislation Committee, which will handle legislation pertaining to constitutional amendments, commissions, resolutions and issues that do not fall within the purview of other standing committees.

[Click here to see Conduct Committee release.](#)

[Click here to see Special Legislation Committee release.](#)

- **Several new committee chairs appointed in the House of Representatives**
Speaker Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) has appointed several new chairs to various House committees this week. Rep. Robert E. Craven (D-Dist. 32, North Kingstown) was appointed as the new chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. Rep. Joseph J. Solomon Jr. (D-Dist. 22, Warwick) was named chairman of the House Committee on Municipal Government. Rep. Anastasia P. Williams (D-Dist. 9, Providence) was named chairwoman of the House Committee on Labor. Rep. Gregg Amore (D-Dist. 65, East Providence) has been appointed chairman of the House Committee on Small Business. Rep. David A. Bennett (D-Dist. 20, Warwick, Cranston) has been appointed chairman of the House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources.

[Click here for Rep. Craven release.](#)

[Click here for Rep. Solomon release.](#)

[Click here for Rep. Williams release.](#)

[Click here for Rep. Amore release.](#)

[Click here for Rep. Bennett release.](#)

- **Senate committees discuss federal shutdown impacts, legislation**

The Senate Finance Committee OK'd legislation ([2019-S 0065](#)) sponsored by its chairman, Sen. William J. Conley Jr. (D-Dist. 18, East Providence, Pawtucket) to enable towns to grant tax relief measures to federal employees furloughed as a result of the federal government shutdown, and discussed effects of the shutdown on federally funded state programs. The Senate Judiciary Committee held a hearing on a separate bill ([2019-S 0085](#)) sponsored by Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) to protect furloughed federal workers from long-term financial consequences, such as foreclosure and repossession of vehicles.

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

- **Rep. Vella-Wilkinson to cohost veterans program on Capitol Television**

Rep. Camille F.J. Vella-Wilkinson (D-Dist. 21, Warwick) will begin cohosting a monthly veterans program on Capitol Television called "Veterans Front and Center" with Capitol TV Director Margie O'Brien. The program will highlight military veterans' issues as well as share "war stories" about Rhode Island veterans. The first episode is scheduled to air on Wednesday, Jan. 30, at 8 p.m.

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