

March 22, 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>



- **House OKs Bennett bill to allow students sunscreen in schools**  
The House passed legislation ([2019-H 5118](#)) sponsored by Rep. David A. Bennett (D-Dist. 20, Warwick, Cranston) to allow students and anyone else in public schools to possess and apply sunscreen at school and school events. Current state regulations prohibit anyone other than a school nurse from administering medications, including Food and Drug Administration-approved substances like sunscreen at school. Sen. Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) is sponsoring identical legislation ([2019-S 0116](#)) in the Senate.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **O'Brien bill on substance abuse, suicide prevention passes House**  
The House of Representatives passed Rep. William W. O'Brien's (D-Dist. 54, North Providence) legislation ([2019-H 5253](#)) that amends substance abuse and suicide prevention education in the health education curriculum by including information that mixing opioids and alcohol can cause accidental death.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House Judiciary Committee hears testimony on several gun bills**  
The House Judiciary Committee met and heard several hours of testimony on a variety of bills relating to firearms. Among the proposals heard was legislation ([2019-H 5703](#)) sponsored by Rep. Daniel P. McKiernan (D-Dist. 7, Providence) that defines the term "ghost gun" and bans the manufacture, sale purchase or possession of a machine gun, a ghost gun or an undetectable firearm. Also heard was legislation ([2019-H 5739](#)) sponsored by Rep. Justine A. Caldwell (D-Dist. 30, East Greenwich,

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West Greenwich) that prohibits the sale or possession of a feeding device holding more than 10 ammunition rounds.

- **Committees hear testimony on FY 2020 budget article relating to marijuana**  
The House Finance, Senate Finance, and Senate Judiciary committees met this week and heard testimony on [Article 20](#) of the governor’s FY 2020 state budget proposal. The article relates to several changes to the state’s medical marijuana and hemp laws, as well as the authorization and regulation of legal recreational marijuana for persons 21 years old or older.
- **Bill would require suicide prevention training for public school personnel**  
Rep. Terri Cortvriend (D-Dist. 72, Portsmouth, Middletown), Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) and Sen. James A. Seveney (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol, Tiverton) have introduced the Nathan Bruno and Jason Flatt Act ([2019-H 5564](#), [2019-S 0545](#)) to require all public school districts to adopt suicide prevention policies and train all personnel in suicide awareness and prevention annually. The idea for the bill was brought to them by an organization called “Be Great for Nate,” started by friends of Nathan Bruno, a Portsmouth teen who took his own life last year. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Bill would require insurance, Medicaid coverage for doula services**  
Rep. Marcia Ranglin-Vassell (D-Dist. 5, Providence) has submitted legislation ([2019-H 5609](#)) to make doula services eligible for reimbursement through private insurance and Medicaid programs. The bill’s purpose is to achieve healthier outcomes for women and babies, particularly for black women, who experience significantly higher rates of death or injury during childbirth. Sen. Ana B. Quezada (D-Dist. 2, Providence) intends to introduce the bill in the Senate. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House, Senate health committees discuss scientific approach to addiction policy**  
The Senate Health and Human Services Committee and the House Committee on Health, Education and Welfare met jointly for a presentation by the Stanford Network on Addiction Policy on using science to protect public health in relation to opioids, cannabis and vaping. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Ackerman bill would require 911 to certify over-the-phone CPR**  
Rep. Mia Ackerman (D-Dist. 45, Cumberland, Lincoln) has introduced legislation ([2019-H 5568](#)) that would improve over-the-phone CPR instructions by requiring the 911 system to certify and staff individuals trained in telecommunicator CPR. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House of Representatives hosts 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Veterans Outreach Day**  
The House of Representatives hosted its third annual Military and Veterans Outreach Day. The event, which was organized by Rep. Camille F.J. Vella-Wilkinson (D-Dist. 21, Warwick), gave veterans and their families an opportunity to network and get a greater understanding of the resources available to them. Veterans and their families were given an opportunity to meet their state representatives and discuss the issues that have an impact on their lives.

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