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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>



- **Bill to allow mobile sports wagering becomes law**
Gov. Gina Raimondo has signed legislation ([2019-S 0037A](#), [2019-H 5241](#)) introduced by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggiero (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) and Speaker of the House Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) that will allow mobile sports wagering through the Twin River casinos in Lincoln and Tiverton. The legislation will enable the creation of an app consumers could use to access the sports gaming offerings at Twin River from anyplace in Rhode Island. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **General Assembly passes bill to collect sales tax from online retailers**
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2019-S 0251A](#), [2019-H 5278A](#)) introduced by Sen. William J. Conley Jr. (D-Dist. 18, East Providence, Pawtucket) and Rep. Marvin L. Abney (D-Dist. 73, Newport, Middletown) that would provide a process for collecting sales tax from out-of-state sellers — removing the unfair advantage online retailers have in competing against Rhode Island businesses. The measure now moves to the governor's office. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House passes two bills recommended by sexual harassment commission**
The House passed legislation ([2019-H 5341](#)) sponsored by Rep. Evan P. Shanley (D-Dist. 24, Warwick) to extend the timeframe within which a person can file a complaint about an alleged unlawful employment practice with the Rhode Island Commission for Human Rights, as well as legislation ([2019-H 5340](#)) sponsored by Rep. Carol Hagan McEntee (D-Dist. 33, South Kingstown, Narragansett) to exclude the period of investigation of a discrimination case by the Human Rights Commission

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from counting toward the legal statute of limitations on legal action in Superior Court. Both bills were recommended by a commission chaired by Rep. Teresa Tanzi (D-Dist. 34, Narragansett, South Kingstown) that studied sexual harassment and discrimination laws last year.

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- **House OKs Edwards bill for engineers to maintain designer's licenses**
The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2019-H 5365](#)) introduced by House Majority Whip John G. Edwards (D-Dist. 70, Portsmouth, Tiverton) that would provide that professional engineers who are registered and authorized to practice by the Rhode Island State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers meet the qualifications for a designer's license. The measure now moves to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2019-S 0398](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Roger A. Picard (D-Dist. 20, Woonsocket, Cumberland).
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. McNamara, Sen. Euer introduce protections for student loans**
Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) and Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) are introducing legislation backed by General Treasurer Seth Magaziner and Attorney General Peter F. Neronha to protect student loan borrowers and establish oversight of student loan servicers operating in Rhode Island.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Health committee chairmen submit bills to enact much of ACA at state level**
The same week the Trump administration urged a federal appeals court to invalidate the entire Affordable Care Act, Senate Health and Human Services Committee Chairman Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) and House Health, Education and Welfare Committee Chairman Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) introduced legislation ([2019-S 0738](#), [2019-H 5916](#)) to protect Rhode Islanders by enacting many of its provisions at the state level.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Vella-Wilkinson bill would allow pharmacists to prescribe birth control**
The House Committee on Health, Education and Welfare heard testimony on legislation ([2019-H 5549](#)) introduced by Rep. Camille F.J. Vella-Wilkinson (D-Dist. 21, Warwick) that would allow pharmacists to prescribe and dispense birth control, provided that the pharmacist has completed a training program approved by the state board of pharmacy.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House resolution condemns desecration of Hebrew cemetery**
The House unanimously approved a resolution condemning the recent desecration of a Hebrew cemetery in Fall River. The House resolution ([2019-H 5927](#)) was sponsored by the three Jewish members of the House, Rep. Jason Knight (D-Dist. 67, Barrington, Warren), Rep. Rebecca Kislak (D-Dist. 4, Providence) and Rep. Mia Ackerman (D-Dist. 45, Cumberland, Lincoln).
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Donovan bill would ban intentional release of balloons**
Rep. Susan Donovan (D-Dist. 69, Bristol, Portsmouth) has introduced a bill ([2019-H 5865](#)) to protect the environment and wildlife by banning the intentional release of balloons into the air. Deflated balloons kill or hurt animals that mistake them for food and their strings can entangle them.
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- **Committee hears bill to let terminally ill end their lives with prescribed drugs**
The House Health, Education and Welfare Committee heard legislation ([2019-H 5555](#)) sponsored by Rep. Edith H. Ajello (D-Dist. 1, Providence) to provide a legal mechanism whereby a terminally ill patient may choose to end their life using drugs prescribed by a physician. Sen. Gayle L. Goldin (D-Dist. 3, Providence) is sponsoring the legislation ([2019-S 0157](#)) in the Senate.

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