

Jan. 24, 2020

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>



- **Assault weapon, high-capacity magazine bans introduced**  
Rep. Justine A. Caldwell (D-Dist. 30, East Greenwich, West Greenwich), Sen. Gayle L. Goldin (D-Dist. 3, Providence) and Sen. Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) reintroduced their bills to ban assault weapons ([2020-H 7263](#), [2020-S 2131](#)) and high-capacity magazines ([2020-H 7264](#), [2020-S 2130](#)) saying such weapons have no legitimate purpose and that they endanger the public by enabling shooters to swiftly commit mass murder.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Bill would allow abortion coverage by Medicaid, state employees' insurance**  
On the 47<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landmark Roe v. Wade decision protecting the right to choose an abortion, Sen. Bridget Valverde (D-Dist. 35, North Kingstown, East Greenwich, Narragansett, South Kingstown) and Rep. Liana Cassar (D-Dist. 66, Barrington, East Providence) announced legislation that will lift the ban on abortion coverage for state employee health plans and ensure that abortion care is covered by Medicaid.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Committees take testimony on leaders' medical marijuana bill**  
The House and Senate Judiciary committees held hearings on legislation ([2020-H 7013](#), [2020-S 2006](#)) sponsored by House Speaker Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) and Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) to address separation of powers issues connected to compassion center licensing statutes and regulations. Both committees will continue to study the bills.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. McNamara bill would establish drug affordability board**  
Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) has introduced

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legislation that would create a prescription drug affordability board to protect Rhode Islanders from the high costs of prescription drug products. Under the proposed legislation ([2020-H 7121](#)) the board would be tasked with investigating and comprehensively evaluating drug prices for Rhode Islanders and possible ways to reduce them to make them more affordable.

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

▪ **Martin Luther King Jr. Commission observes annual celebration**

The Martin Luther King Jr. State Holiday Commission held its annual celebration of the life of the great civil rights leader on Monday, Jan. 20, at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Providence. The official holiday commemoration included remarks by commission members, state and religious leaders, and several musical presentations. Rep. Raymond A. Hull (D-Dist. 6, Providence, North Providence), who chairs the MLK State Holiday Commission, served as master of ceremonies.

▪ **Senate Judiciary Committee passes bill that will ban 3-D printed guns**

The Senate Judiciary Committee passed legislation ([2020-S 2004A](#)) sponsored by Sen. Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) that would prohibit the possession, manufacturing or selling of 3-D printed firearms, “ghost guns” and other untraceable or undetectable firearms in Rhode Island. The legislation now heads to the full Senate for consideration. Similar legislation ([2020-H 7102](#)) introduced by Rep. Patricia Serpa (D-Dist. 27, West Warwick, Coventry, Warwick), was heard by the House Judiciary Committee.

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

▪ **Rep. Diaz introduces ‘Student Bill of Rights’ legislation**

Rep. Grace Diaz (D-Dist. 11, Providence) has introduced legislation ([2020-H 7269](#)) that would provide students attending public schools enrolled in grades K-12 with a students’ bill of rights prohibiting discrimination based on race, sex, gender, economic status or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disabilities.

▪ **Rep. Shanley legislation would allow online vehicle registration**

Rep. Evan Patrick Shanley (D-Dist. 24, Warwick) has introduced legislation ([2020-H 7301](#)) that would authorize online registration of vehicles sold by a dealership and would extend the term of an operator’s license from five to 10 years. It would also require the Division of Motor Vehicles to forward mail it sends out to motorists to the secretary of state’s office when such mail is returned as undeliverable. It would also allow licenses plates to be returned through the mail.