

State of Rhode Island

JOURNAL

-OF THE-

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY SESSION of the General Assembly begun and held at the State House in the City of Providence on Tuesday, the Seventh Day of January in the year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Six.

Volume 153, No. 14

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Fourteenth Day

The House of Representatives meets at the State House in Providence on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, and is called to order at 4:17 o'clock P.M. by the Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi, Speaker.

The roll is called, and a quorum is declared present with 71 members present and 4 members absent as follows:

PRESENT – 71: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Ackerman, Ajello, Alzate, Azzinaro, Baginski, Batista, Bennett, Biah, Blazejewski, Boylan, Brien, Caldwell, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Chippendale, Cortvriend, Corvese, Cotter, Craven, Cruz, Dawson, DeSimone, Diaz, Donovan, Edwards, Fascia, Felix, Fellela, Finkelman, Fogarty, Furtado, Giraldo, Handy, Hopkins, Hull, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Lima, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Nardone, Newberry, Noret, O'Brien, Paplauskas, Perez, Phillips, Place, Potter, Quattrocchi, Read, Roberts, Sanchez, Santucci, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Spears, Stewart, Tanzi, and Voas.

ABSENT – 4: Representatives Abney, Costantino, Kazarian, and Serpa.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi presents Representative John J. Lombardi, who delivers the Invocation and leads the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

(For Invocation, see Appendix, this Journal.)

APPROVAL OF RECORD

By unanimous consent, the House Journal of Thursday, February 26, 2026, is approved.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE SPEAKER

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi makes the following appointment:

Representative Jennifer Boylan will serve as a Member of the House Commission on Climate Change Impacts and Solutions, replacing Representative Tina Spears.

NEW BUSINESS**House Bill No. 8219**

BY Boylan, Speakman, Cortvriend, McGaw, Knight, Handy, Potter, Carson, Caldwell, DeSimone
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO INSURANCE -- RHODE ISLAND INSURANCE
MARKET PROTECTION ACT (Regulates property insurers to limit underwriting and investment in
fossil fuel projects, requires climate risk reporting and emissions disclosures, and aligns insurance
practices with science-based climate targets.) {LC4953/1}
03/03/2026 Introduced, referred to House Corporations

House Bill No. 8220

BY Read, Noret, Furtado, Shekarchi, Casimiro, Bennett, Potter, Voas
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES -- HOMELESSNESS
EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (Creates a state-run pilot program in Rhode Island that provides paid,
low-barrier employment to individuals experiencing homelessness for community beautification and
cleanup projects while connecting participants to supportive services.) {LC5963/1}
03/03/2026 Introduced, referred to House Municipal Government & Housing

CALENDAR

From the Calendar are taken:

IN ORDER FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2026:**1. 2026-H 7373**

BY Felix

ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- PROPERTY SUBJECT TO
TAXATION

Committee on Municipal Government & Housing recommends passage.

Chairman Casey moves passage of the act, seconded by Majority Leader Blazejewski,
Representatives Stewart, Cruz, Alzate, Tanzi, and Shallcross Smith.

Chairman Casey, Representatives Santucci, Newberry, Cruz, Carson, Minority Leader Chippendale,
Deputy Speaker Hull, and Representative Tanzi discuss the act.

Read and passed, on a roll call vote, 65 members voting in the affirmative and 7 members voting in the negative as follows:

YEAS - 65: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Abney, Ackerman, Ajello, Alzate, Azzinaro, Baginski, Batista, Bennett, Biah, Blazejewski, Boylan, Brien, Caldwell, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Chippendale, Cortvriend, Corvese, Cotter, Craven, Cruz, Dawson, DeSimone, Diaz, Donovan, Edwards, Felix, Fellela, Finkelman, Fogarty, Furtado, Giraldo, Handy, Hopkins, Hull, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Lima, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Noret, O'Brien, Paplauskas, Perez, Phillips, Potter, Read, Sanchez, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Spears, Stewart, Tanzi, Voas.

NAYS - 7: Representatives Fascia, Nardone, Newberry, Place, Quattrocchi, Roberts, Santucci.

RECUSED - 0:

By unanimous consent, the House returns to:

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairman Solomon announces that the Committee on Corporations will meet today, at the rise of the House, in the House Lounge of the State House.

GUESTS

Chairman Solomon expresses his gratitude and acknowledges the diligent efforts of Rhode Island Energy employees in promptly restoring power during the recent blizzard. He extends a warm welcome to Greg Cornett, President; Kathy Castro, Vice President of Electric Operations; Brian Stowe, Field Manager of Electric Operations; Raymond Turner, Crew Leader of Electric Operations; Michele Leone, Vice President of Gas Operations; Joseph Curley, Director of Gas Operations; Derek Dunne, Technician in Gas Operations; Brian Schuster, Senior Director of External Affairs; and Nick Ucci, Director of Government Affairs, to the House. Speaker Shekarchi thanks them for their hard work and welcomes them to the House.

Chairwoman Fogarty proudly welcomes the Women's Fund of Rhode Island CEO, Kelly Nevins; Chief of Government Relations, Angela Lima; board members; and former chairs of the Advocacy Committee, Julie DiBari and current chair, Lisa Jones. They are here today in celebration of the Women's Fund's 25th Anniversary. Speaker Shekarchi thanks them for their advocacy and welcomes them to the House.

Representative Caldwell warmly welcomes Aimee Falso, Nathalie Vega Orlandini, and Dr. Jessica Pepitone to the House Chamber to acknowledge Reach Out and Read Rhode Island. This program incorporates books into well-child visits and is the only literacy program endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

In celebration of The Cibuco-Bayamon Taino Tribe's 250th Anniversary, of the founding of Rhode Island, and the proclamation of the historical Indigenous Caribbean Taino presence in the state.

Representative Batista proudly welcomes distinguished guests, Chief Kasike Tureyguá Taino Cay Joel Rosario Tapia of the Cibuco Bayamon Clan Taino Tribe, Chief Kasike Guanibo Marokael Manicato Eric Mercado of the Baitoa Magua Yakue Taino. Also accompanying them is Ms. Rosa Taina Rosario to the House. Speaker Shekarchi welcomes them to the House.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairwoman Donovan announces that the Committee on Health & Human Services will meet today, at the rise of the House, in Room 135 of the State House.

Deputy Majority Whip Ackerman wishes everyone who celebrates Purim a happy holiday.

Vice-Chairman Slater announces that the Committee on Finance will meet today, at the rise of the House, in Room 35 of the State House.

PROXY VOTES

Majority Leader Blazejewski announces, pursuant to Rule 33(e), authorizing Proxy Votes, he has received a request from Chairman Abney to be recorded in the affirmative for item #1.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Majority Leader Blazejewski announces that the next House session will be held on Thursday, March 5, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. However, two committees will be meeting tomorrow, the Finance Committee in room 35, and the Judiciary Committee in the House Lounge, both at 4:00 p.m.

Now that the deadline for bill introductions has passed, today was the first day Members must give notice under House Rule 7(d) to introduce bills on the next legislative day. Additionally, this rule limits each member to three (3) bills.

IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION

House Resolution No. 8221

BY Batista, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Kennedy, Ajello, Shallcross Smith, Fellela, Diaz, Fogarty

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE CULTURE AND HERITAGE OF TAÍNO DESCENDANTS IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC5197/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Representative Batista requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Representative Batista discusses the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Representative Batista seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

House Resolution No. 8222

BY Caldwell, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Kennedy, Ajello, Shallcross Smith, Fellela, Diaz, Fogarty

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING "REACH OUT AND READ RHODE ISLAND DAY" ON MARCH 3, 2026 IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC5892/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Representative Caldwell requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Representative Caldwell discusses the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Representative Caldwell seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

House Resolution No. 8223

BY Cotter, Carson, Spears, McGaw, Caldwell, Boylan, Speakman, Chippendale, Shekarchi, Blazejewski

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING MARCH OF 2026, TO BE "WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC3524/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Representative Cotter requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Representative Cotter discusses the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Representative Cotter, seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

House Resolution No. 8224

BY Alzate, Casimiro, Furtado, Baginski, Messier, Diaz, Cotter, Hopkins, Shekarchi, Blazejewski

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MARCH 8, 2026, AS "INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC3528/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Chairwoman Alzate requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Chairwoman Alzate discusses the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Chairwoman Alzate seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

House Resolution No. 8225

BY Fogarty, Ackerman, Carson, Tanzi, Boylan, Cortvriend, Diaz, Casimiro, Shekarchi, Blazejewski
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
FOUNDING OF THE WOMEN'S FUND OF RHODE ISLAND (WFRI) {LC4597/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Chairwoman Fogarty requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Chairwoman Fogarty discusses the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Chairwoman Fogarty, seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

House Resolution No. 8226

BY Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Solomon, Chippendale, Paplauskas, Casimiro, Casey, Kennedy, Ajello, Shallcross Smith
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION COMMENDING RHODE ISLAND ENERGY AND LOCAL
UTILITY WORKERS ON RESTORATION EFFORTS DURING EXTREME WINTER
WEATHER EVENTS {LC5927/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Chairman Solomon requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Chairman Solomon and Chairwoman Fogarty discuss the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Chairman Solomon, seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

House Resolution No. 8227

BY Blazejewski, Chippendale
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION EXTENDING CONGRATULATIONS {LC5908/1}

Majority Leader Blazejewski requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Read and passed, on a motion of Majority Leader Blazejewski, seconded by Minority Leader Chippendale, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

House Resolution No. 8228**BY** Blazejewski, Chippendale**ENTITLED**, HOUSE RESOLUTION EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES {LC5907/1}

Majority Leader Blazejewski requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Read and passed, on a motion of Majority Leader Blazejewski, seconded by Minority Leader Chippendale, by unanimous consent, on a rising vote.

RULE 7D**The following bills were received pursuant to Rule 7D:**

Representative Alzate-An Act relating to Alcohol Beverages-Retail Licenses

Representative Bennett-An Act relating to Lung Cancer Screening

Representative Casimiro-An Act relating to Courts and Civil Procedures

Representative Desimone-An Act relating to the Establishment of Charter Public Schools

Representative Diaz-An Act relating to Education

Representative Donovan-An Act relating to Accident-Sickness Insurance Policies

Representative Felix-An Act relating to Education Equity

An Act relating to State Affairs and Government

An Act relating to Food and Drugs

Representative Hull-An Act relating to Public Officers and Employees-Retirement System

Representative Messier-An Act relating to Nicotine

Representative Newberry-An Act relating to Commercial Law-Deceptive Trade Practices

Representative Shallcross Smith-An Act relating to AI Social Work

Representative Voas-An Act relating to Nominator of Party and Independent Candidates

By unanimous consent, the House returns to:

TRANSMITTAL

By unanimous consent, all matters on the clerk's desk are ordered to be transmitted to His Excellency, the Governor, to the Honorable Senate and the Honorable Secretary of State forthwith.

(For Transmittals to Governor, see Appendix of this Journal.)

DESK HELD OPEN

The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi announces that the desk will be held open.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Honorable Senate transmits with announcement of passage of the following measures:

Senate Bill No. 2341 SUB A

(Secretary of State)

BY LaMountain

ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- MAIL BALLOTS (Entitles disabled and military voters to utilize electronically transmitted ballots.) {LC3679/A/1}

03/04/2026 Referred to House State Government & Elections

Senate Bill No. 2757

BY Sosnowski

ENTITLED, AN ACT TO VACATE THE FORFEITURE OR REVOCATION OF THE CHARTER OF ROBERTS AND ROCHA, INC. {LC5495/1}

03/04/2026 Referred to House Corporations

NEW BUSINESS**House Bill No. 8229**

BY Kislak

ENTITLED, AN ACT TO VACATE THE FORFEITURE OR REVOCATION OF THE CHARTER OF THE DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR., PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION {LC5952/1}

03/04/2026 Introduced, referred to House Corporations

House Bill No. 8230

BY Lombardi, Hull

ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES -- RETAIL LICENSES

(Allows for the issuance of a Class BV liquor license for the property located at 819 Westminster Street in the city of Providence.) {LC5550/1}

03/04/2026 Introduced, referred to House Municipal Government & Housing

House Bill No. 8231**BY** Quattrocchi**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES -- LICENSES GENERALLY (Authorizes the town of Scituate to issue a total of three (3) Class A liquor licenses.) {LC5987/1}

03/04/2026 Introduced, referred to House Municipal Government & Housing

House Bill No. 8232**BY** Chippendale, Santucci, Place**ENTITLED**, AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE FORMATION OF A REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT EMBRACING THE TOWNS OF FOSTER AND GLOCESTER (Changes the date of the regional school district financial meeting for the Foster-Glocester regional school district to March 24, 2026.) {LC5988/1}

03/04/2026 Introduced, referred to House Municipal Government & Housing

ADJOURNMENT

At 5:01 o'clock P.M. on motion of Representative Solomon, Jr., and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Manuel Pedroso; on motion of Representative Chippendale, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of David A. Fecteau; on motion of Representative Cortvriend and as a further mark of respect to the memory of James L. Garman; on motion of Representative Diaz, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Cesar A. Mateo, seconded by Leader Blazejewski and Deputy Majority Leader Ackerman the House adjourns, on a unanimous rising vote.

Diane M. DePina
Recording Clerk

APPENDIX

INVOCATION

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN J. LOMBARDI

Almighty God: We come to you asking for your blessing as we gather. We pray for guidance in the matters at hand. We also pray that conflicts around the world can be resolved peacefully, compassionately, and justly. Amen.

APPENDIX

CALENDAR

IN ORDER FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2026:

1. **2026-H 7043 SUB A**
BY Azzinaro
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES -- RETAIL
LICENSES

Committee on Municipal Government & Housing recommends indefinite postponement of the original bill and passage of Substitute A.

Francis McCabe
Clerk of the House

Thursday, February 26, 2026