

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. 18

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Eighteenth Day

The House of Representatives meets at the State House in Providence on Tuesday, March 17, 2026, and is called to order at 4:06 o'clock P.M. by the Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi, Speaker.

The roll is called, and a quorum is declared present with 66 members present and 9 members absent as follows:

PRESENT – 66: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Abney, Ackerman, Ajello, Alzate, Azzinaro, Bennett, Biah, Blazejewski, Boylan, Brien, Caldwell, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Chippendale, Cortvriend, Corvese, Costantino, Cotter, Cruz, Dawson, DeSimone, Diaz, Donovan, Edwards, Fascia, Finkelman, Fogarty, Furtado, Handy, Hopkins, Hull, Kazarian, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Lima, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Nardone, Noret, O'Brien, Paplauskas, Perez, Phillips, Place, Potter, Quattrocchi, Read, Roberts, Santucci, Serpa, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Spears, Stewart, and Voas.

ABSENT – 9: Representatives Baginski, Batista, Craven, Felix, Fellela, Giraldo, Newberry, Sanchez, and Tanzi.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi presents Representative Stephen M. Casey, 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, March 12, 2026, is approved.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE SPEAKER

March 17, 2026

Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi has nominated Representative Terri Cortvriend for the National Conference of State Legislatures' Energy Horizon Institute in July 2026.

COMMUNICATIONS

Representative Joshua J. Giraldo is unable to attend session today, Tuesday, March 17, 2026.
Representative Deborah A. Fellela is unable to attend session today, Tuesday, March 17, 2026.
Representative Jose F. Batista is unable to attend session today, Tuesday, March 17, 2026.
Representative Enrique G. Sanchez is unable to attend session today, Tuesday, March 17, 2026.
Representative Jacquelyn M. Baginski is unable to attend session today, Tuesday, March 17, 2026.

CALENDAR

From the Calendar are taken:

IN ORDER FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2026:

- 1. 2026-H 7554**
BY Fogarty
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- PUBLIC UTILITIES

Committee on Judiciary recommends passage.

Chairwoman McEntee moves passage of the act, seconded by Majority Leader Blazejewski, Representatives Noret, Caldwell, Fogarty, Potter, Knight, Carson, Spears, Donovan, Biah, Shallcross Smith, Cortvriend, Corvese, Edwards, and Bennett.

Chairwoman McEntee discusses the act.

Read and passed, on a roll call vote, 59 members voting in the affirmative and 6 members voting in the negative as follows:

YEAS - 59: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Abney, Ackerman, Ajello, Alzate, Azzinaro, Bennett, Biah, Blazejewski, Boylan, Brien, Caldwell, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Chippendale, Cortvriend, Corvese, Costantino, Cotter, Cruz, Dawson, DeSimone, Diaz, Donovan, Edwards, Finkelman, Fogarty, Furtado, Handy, Hopkins, Hull, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Lima, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Noret, O'Brien, Paplauskas, Perez, Phillips, Potter, Read, Serpa, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Spears, Stewart, Voas.

NAYS - 6: Representatives Fascia, Nardone, Place, Quattrocchi, Roberts, Santucci.

RECUSED - 0:

2. 2026-H 7036**BY** Casimiro**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO DELINQUENT AND DEPENDENT CHILDREN -- PROCEEDINGS IN FAMILY COURT

Committee on Judiciary recommends passage.

Chairwoman McEntee moves passage of the act, seconded by Majority Leader Blazejewski, Representatives Morales, Caldwell, Ajello, Carson, Shallcross Smith, Serpa, Donovan, Bennett, and Edwards.

Chairwoman McEntee discusses the act.

Read and passed, on a roll call vote, 65 members voting in the affirmative and 0 members voting in the negative as follows:

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

NAYS - 0:

RECUSED - 0:

3. 2026-H 7002**BY** Corvese**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO BUSINESSES AND PROFESSIONS -- BOARD OF MEDICAL LICENSURE AND DISCIPLINE

Committee on Corporations recommends passage.

Chairman Solomon moves passage of the act, seconded by Majority Leader Blazejewski, Representatives Knight, Corvese, Edwards, McEntee, Ajello, Morales, Caldwell, O'Brien, Phillips, Cotter, Carson, Bennett, and Casey.

Chairman Solomon discusses the act.

Read and passed, on a roll call vote, 64 members voting in the affirmative and 0 members voting in the negative as follows:

YEAS - 64: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Abney, Ackerman, Ajello, Azzinaro, Bennett, Biah, Blazejewski, Boylan, Brien, Caldwell, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Chippendale, Cortvriend, Corvese, Costantino, Cotter, Cruz, Dawson, DeSimone, Diaz, Donovan, Edwards, Fascia, Finkelman, Fogarty, Furtado, Handy, Hopkins, Hull, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight,

Lima, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Nardone, Noret, O'Brien, Paplauskas, Perez, Phillips, Place, Potter, Quattrocchi, Read, Roberts, Santucci, Serpa, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Spears, Stewart, Voas.

NAYS - 0:

RECUSED - 0:

By unanimous consent, the House returns to:

ADDRESS

In honor of St. Patrick's Day, Speaker Pro Tempore Kennedy addressed the chamber, recognizing the profound influence of Irish tradition and culture in our state and beyond. His remarks highlighted the Irish community's rich heritage and enduring contributions, reminding us of the values of resilience, family, and unity that continue to shape our society. Adding to the celebration, Chairman McNamara shared a heartfelt Irish poem titled "American Teamwork."

(For the St. Patrick's Poem, see Appendix of this Journal.)

GUESTS

In celebration of St. Patrick's Day, Chairwoman Fogarty proudly welcomes both owners of McDonald's in Rhode Island, David Balducci and Joseph Spadea, State & Local Government Relations Director, Elena Margolis, and Chief Executive Officer of the Ronald McDonald House of New England, Lauren Hoops-Schmieg, to the House. Speaker Shekarchi thanks them for their work in the communities and welcomes them to the House Chamber.

Chairwoman Alzate and Chairwoman Diaz proudly welcome Councilwoman Shelley Peterson, her husband, Doug, and her children, Gianna and Miles, to the House Chamber in recognition of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month.

Representative Cruz warmly welcomes Jan Randall, Director of Family Support for Community Autism Resources, to the House; mom advocates Kerri Cassino, Filipa DaSilva and her children, Alicia and Frankie DaSilva, Karen Dockery, Kevin DeJesus, host of The Compass; and a member of the US Commission on Civil Rights RI State Advisory Board, in recognition of Profound Autism Day.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairwoman Serpa and Speaker Shekarchi warmly express their heartfelt condolences to Representative Fellela and her entire family during this difficult time following the loss of her husband, Henry.

GUESTS

Chairman Corvese and Speaker Shekarchi welcome back to the House former Representative Anastasia Williams.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-Chairwoman Kislak announces that the Committee on Education will meet today, at the rise of the House, in Room 101 of the State House.

Chairman Casey announces that the Committee on Municipal Government & Housing will meet today, at the rise of the House, in the House Lounge of the State House.

GUESTS

Representative Noret warmly welcomes intern Cameron Hudson to the House.

Majority Leader Blazejewski announces that the next House session will be held on Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. However, three committees will meet tomorrow: the House Finance Subcommittee on General Government and the Labor Committee will both meet at 4:00 p.m., and the Judiciary Committee will meet at 4:30 p.m.

Majority Leader Blazejewski, on behalf of Speaker Shekarchi, extends his deepest sympathies to the Casale family. Mrs. Casale was married to the late John Casale Jr. for 68 years. She was the backbone of the family, a strong woman who held everyone together with her strength, guidance, and support. Her legacy lives on through her children. All will deeply miss her.

IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION**House Resolution No. 8302**

BY Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Kazarian, Kennedy, Ackerman, Lombardi, Ajello, Cotter, Serpa

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION EXPRESSING DEEPEST CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF ANNA CASALE {LC6146/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Majority Leader Blazejewski, on behalf of Speaker Shekarchi, requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Majority Leader Blazejewski and Speaker Shekarchi discuss the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Majority Leader Blazejewski, seconded by Speaker Shekarchi, and many others, by unanimous consent, on a rising vote.

House Resolution No. 8303

BY Furtado, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Kazarian, Chippendale, Read, Tanzi, Fogarty, Ackerman, Alzate

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING MARCH OF 2026, TO BE "BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC3536/1}

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

There is no objection.

Representative Furtado discusses the resolution.

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

House Resolution No. 8304

BY Morales, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Cruz, Stewart, McEntee, Shanley, Kennedy, Ackerman

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING MARCH 18, 2026, TO BE "TRANSIT EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC3535/1}

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

There is no objection.

Representative Morales discusses the resolution.

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

House Resolution No. 8305

BY Cruz, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Lombardi, Potter, Brien, Stewart, Morales, Hopkins
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING MARCH 17, 2026, TO BE "PROFOUND AUTISM DAY IN RHODE ISLAND" {LC5902/1}

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

There is no objection.

Representative Cruz discusses the resolution.

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

House Resolution No. 8306

BY Alzate, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Kennedy, DeSimone, Batista, Felix, Hull, Furtado, Sanchez
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING MARCH OF 2026 TO BE "MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AWARENESS MONTH" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC6078/1}

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

There is no objection.

Chairwoman Alzate and Chairwoman Diaz discuss 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. 8307

BY Kennedy, Shanley, Dawson, O'Brien, Fogarty, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Azzinaro, Hull, Chippendale
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION CELEBRATING ST. PATRICK'S DAY AND HONORING IRISH AMERICAN PATRIOTS' ROLE IN THE UNITED STATES WAR OF INDEPENDENCE {LC3533/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Speaker Pro Tempore Kennedy requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Speaker Pro Tempore Kennedy discusses the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Speaker Pro Tempore Kennedy, seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

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

Representative Alzate-An Act relating to the Healthy Safety Families Workplace Act

Representative Biah-An Act relating to School Committees and Superintendents

Representative Cruz-An Act relating to Zoning Ordinance

Representative Diaz-An Act relating to Vehicle Registration
An Act relating to Virtual Court Hearings

Representative Kazarian-An Act relating to the Voting Rights Act

Representative Lombardi-An Act relating to Civil Immigration Enforcement

Representative McNamara-An Act relating to Keeping Hope Alive Scholarship

Representative Morales-An Act relating to Labor Relations

Representative Serpa-An Act relating to Human Services-Medicare Assistance

Representative Shallcross Smith-An Act relating to Identity Theft

Representative Slater-An Act relating to Health & Safety-Terminal Patients' Right to Try Act

Representative Tanzi-An Act relating to Child Tax Credits

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. 3051

BY de la Cruz, Rogers

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.) {LC6004/1}

03/17/2026 Placed on House Calendar (03/19/2026)

**REPORTS OF COMMITTEES
COMMITTEE ON MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING**

Chairman Casey, for the Committee on Municipal Government and Housing, reports back the following measure, with recommendation of passage:

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}

03/17/2026 Placed on House Calendar (03/19/2026)

NEW BUSINESS

House Bill No. 8308

BY Place, Hopkins, Cotter, Santucci, Shanley, Noret, Stewart, Knight

ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO INSURANCE -- PRIMARY CARE CONTRACTING GOOD FAITH ACT (Creates the Primary Care Contracting Good Faith Act.) {LC6084/1}

03/18/2026 Introduced, referred to House Corporations

House Bill No. 8309

BY Place, Hopkins, Cotter, Santucci, Shanley, Stewart, Noret, Knight

ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO INSURANCE -- FEE SCHEDULE TRANSPARENCY AND FAIR BILLING ACT (Requires that every insurer providing health coverage insurance provide every physician or physician group with a complete fee schedule seeing for the maximum allowable reimbursement for each covered service.) {LC6086/1}

03/18/2026 Introduced, referred to House Corporations

House Bill No. 8310

BY Place, Hopkins, Santucci, Kislak, McNamara, Cotter, Shanley, Stewart, Noret, Knight

ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO INSURANCE -- ACCIDENT AND SICKNESS INSURANCE POLICIES -- HEALTHCARE PROVIDER CREDENTIALING (Amends the timelines related to healthcare provider credentialing.) {LC6085/1}

03/18/2026 Introduced, referred to House Health & Human Services

House Bill No. 8311

BY Dawson

ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH (Requires employers to protect employees from extreme temperatures through rest breaks, PPE, training, and equipment, and mandates quarterly supervisor training, to recognize and mitigate heat- and cold-related risks.) {LC6132/1}

03/18/2026 Introduced, referred to House Labor

House Bill No. 8312**BY** Phillips, Bennett, Noret, Read, Hull, Brien**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES --

NONTRANSPARENT WINDSHIELDS AND WINDOWS (Removes the exemption for tinting of the windshield and imposes fines of \$250 for a first and second offense and subsequent offenses are punishable by a \$250 fine and up to a one year suspension of the vehicle registration.) {LC6107/1}

03/18/2026 Introduced, referred to House State Government & Elections

House Bill No. 8313**BY** Abney, Carson, Cortvriend**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM -- 2026 BOND

REFERENDA (Submits the state's 2026 capital development program requesting the issuance of general obligation bonds totaling \$217,000,000 for approval of the electorate at the general election to be held in November 2026.) {LC6135/1}

03/18/2026 Introduced, referred to House Finance

House Bill No. 8314**BY** Dawson**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES -- MEDICAL ASSISTANCE --

LONG-TERM CARE SERVICE AND FINANCE REFORM (Raises the per diem rate by thirteen percent (13%) for Medicaid reimbursement for Tier C services provide by assisted living residence beginning January 1, 2027.) {LC6133/1}

03/18/2026 Introduced, referred to House Finance

House Bill No. 8315**BY** Stewart, Alzate, Kislak, Giraldo, Tanzi, DeSimone, Potter, Lombardi, Cruz**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- MOTOR FUEL

TAX (Sets the allocation to RIPTA at the greater of \$0.1175 per gallon or 29.375% of total proceeds, with \$0.005 per gallon derived from the \$0.01 per gallon environmental protection fee.) {LC6120/1}

03/18/2026 Introduced, referred to House Finance

House Resolution No. 8316**BY** Handy, Fogarty, Cortvriend, McEntee, Kazarian, Paplauskas, Stewart, Edwards, Caldwell, Read**ENTITLED**, JOINT RESOLUTION MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$150,000 TO THE

MAIN STREET RHODE ISLAND PROGRAM (This resolution would authorize the appropriation of the sum of one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) to the Main Street Rhode Island Program.) {LC6064/1}

03/18/2026 Introduced, referred to House Finance

House Resolution No. 8317**BY** Alzate**ENTITLED**, JOINT RESOLUTION MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF \$5,000,000 TO THE

RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY (Authorizes the appropriation of the sum of five million dollars (\$5,000,000) to the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority to continue services, fills the budget deficit and restore service cuts, and implements the State's Act on Climate.)

{LC6141/1}

03/18/2026 Introduced, referred to House Finance

House Bill No. 8318

BY Knight, Cortvriend, Caldwell, Alzate, Stewart, Kazarian, Casimiro, Dawson, Fogarty, Speakman **ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS -- UNIFORM CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT (Prescriptions for testosterone not allowed to be transmitted or reported within the prescription drug monitoring database and removes from the records all existing information concerning prior testosterone prescriptions.) {LC6071/1}
03/18/2026 Introduced, referred to House Health & Human Services

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:59 o'clock P.M. on motion of Representative Blazejewski, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Anna Casale; on motion of Representative Serpa, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Henry A. Fellela, seconded by Majority Whip Kazarian and Chippendale, the House adjourns, on a unanimous rising vote.

Diane M. DePina
Recording Clerk

APPENDIX

INVOCATION

REPRESENTATIVE STEPHEN M. CASEY

May God be with you and bless you,
May you see your children's children.
May you be poor in misfortune, rich in blessings.
May you know nothing but happiness.
From this day forward. Amen

APPENDIX**American Teamwork**

Our families came from distant shores,
To a country that could open doors.

A welcoming place where hard work pays,
With time-and-a-half on Saturdays.

Multilingual parents took lots of chances,
While their children learned all the new dances.

Their American-hybrid kids also had dreams,
That they could play on American teams.

These kids were crazy for American football,
With room for everyone: heavy, lean, short, or tall.

Teams resembled UN committees,
Like our big multi-ethnic cities.

O'Brien, Marszalkowski, Kazarian, Biah, and Lombardi,
Hull, Finkelman, Batista, Brien, and Shekarchi

And not one of them feared an ICE raid.
The only ice was in their Del's lemonade.

Faith in their melting-pot teams was real.
Spaghetti and meatballs was their favorite meal.

These teams had a little extra fight,
To their opponents, it felt like kryptonite.

Their discipline and teamwork were easy to see,
Bringing them success and victory.

APPENDIX

CALENDAR

IN ORDER FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2026:

1. **2026-H 7111**
BY Solomon
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO INSURANCE -- PRODUCER LICENSING ACT

Committee on Corporations recommends passage.

2. **2026-H 7265**
BY Knight
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS -- THE RHODE ISLAND SPECIAL DEPOSITS ACT

Committee on Corporations recommends passage.

3. **2026-H 8232**
BY Chippendale
ENTITLED, AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE FORMATION OF A REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT EMBRACING THE TOWNS OF FOSTER AND GLOCESTER

Committee on Municipal Government & Housing recommends passage.

4. **2026-S 3051**
BY de la Cruz
ENTITLED, AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE FORMATION OF A REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT EMBRACING THE TOWNS OF FOSTER AND GLOCESTER

Ordered to be placed on the Calendar for passage in concurrence.

Francis McCabe
Clerk of the House

Friday, March 13, 2026

Updated: Tuesday, March 17, 2026

