

State of Rhode Island

Journal of the Senate

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

Volume 153, No. 19

Tuesday, March 24, 2026

Nineteenth Legislative Day

CALL TO ORDER

The Senate meets pursuant to recess and is called to order by The Honorable Valarie J. Lawson, President of the Senate, at 4:12 o'clock P.M.

ROLL CALL

The roll is called and a quorum is declared present with 36 Senators present and 2 Senators absent as follows:

PRESENT –36: The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissaillon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Euer, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Murray, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

ABSENT – 2: Senators DiMario, and Pearson.

INVOCATION

The Honorable President, by unanimous consent, presents Senator Appollonio to deliver the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG

The Honorable President, by unanimous consent, presents Senator Appollonio, to lead the Senate in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

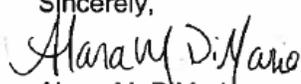
APPROVAL OF RECORD

The Senate Journal of the Eighteenth Day of the 2026 proceedings is read in part.

Upon suggestion of Senator Appollonio and by unanimous consent, further reading of the Journal is dispensed with and the Journal approved as recorded.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Honorable President of the Senate presents the following communications:

<p>SENATOR ALANA M. DiMARIO District 36</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p>Room 308 Rhode Island State House Providence, Rhode Island 02903</p> <p>OFFICE: 401-276-5568</p> <p>sen-dimario@rilegislature.gov</p>	<p>State of Rhode Island</p>  <p>Senate Chamber</p>	<p>CHAIR Permanent Legislative Commission On Child Care in Rhode Island</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p>VICE-CHAIR Committee on Housing and Municipal Government</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p>Committee on Finance</p> <hr style="width: 20%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p>Committee on Environment & Agriculture</p>
<p>March 24, 2026</p> <p>The Honorable Valarie J. Lawson President of the Senate State House, Room 318 Providence, RI 02903</p> <p>Dear Madam President:</p> <p>Please be advised that on Tuesday, March 24, 2026, I will be absent from Senate Session.</p> <p>I would appreciate you recording my letter in the appropriate Senate Journal. Thank you for your attention to this matter.</p> <p>Sincerely,  Alana M. DiMario Senator District ~ 36</p>		

Placed on file.

APPOINTMENTS BY THE GOVERNOR

The Honorable President presents the following communication from His Excellency, The Governor, transmitting the following appointments and requesting the advice and consent of the Senate thereto:



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR DANIEL J. McKEE

March 9, 2026

TO THE HONORABLE, THE SENATE,

I have the honor to inform you in accordance with the provisions Rhode Island General Laws § 5-1-3, I have made the following appointment to the RI Board of Examination & Registration of Architects:

Christine West
Vice
Mary Brewster

For a term expiring March 4, 2031.

To this Appointment, I respectfully request your advice and consent.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. McKee
Governor

Cc: Honorable Valarie J. Lawson, Senate President
Honorable Frank A. Ciccone III, Senate Majority Leader
Honorable Jessica de la Cruz, Senate Minority Leader

RHODE ISLAND STATE HOUSE, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903

Referred to the Senate Committee on Commerce.



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR DANIEL J. MCKEE

March 16, 2026

TO THE HONORABLE, THE SENATE,

I have the honor to inform you in accordance with the provisions Rhode Island General Laws § 5-1-3, I have made the following appointment to the RI Board of Examination & Registration of Architects:

Douglas P. Kallfelz
Vice
John Grosvenor

For a term expiring March 4, 2031.

To this Appointment, I respectfully request your advice and consent.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel J. McKee".

Daniel J. McKee
Governor

Cc: Honorable Valarie J. Lawson, Senate President
Honorable Frank A. Ciccone III, Senate Majority Leader
Honorable Jessica de la Cruz, Senate Minority Leader

RHODE ISLAND STATE HOUSE, PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903

Referred to the Senate Committee on Commerce.



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR DANIEL J. MCKEE

March 19, 2026

TO THE HONORABLE, THE SENATE:

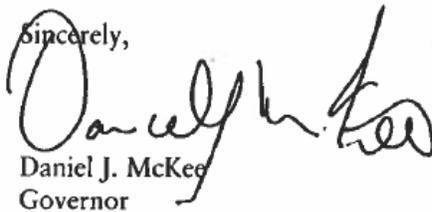
I have the honor to inform you that in accordance with the provisions of Article 10, Section 4 of the Rhode Island Constitution, entitled Judicial Selection, I have made the following appointment as Presiding Justice of the Rhode Island Superior Court:

Associate Justice Joseph A. Montalbano

VICE

Presiding Justice Alice B. Gibney

To this appointment, I respectfully request your advice and consent.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. McKee
Governor

cc: Honorable Gregg M. Amore, Secretary of State
Honorable Valarie Lawson, Senate President
Honorable Frank A. Ciccone, III, Senate Majority Leader
Honorable, Jessica de la Cruz, Senate Minority Leader
Honorable Matthew L. LaMountain, Chair Senate Judiciary
Committee
Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi, Speaker of the House

Referred to the Senate Committee on Judiciary.

IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION**Senate Resolution No. 3140****BY** Acosta, Dimitri**ENTITLED**, SENATE RESOLUTION WELCOMING THE NARRAGANSETT COUNCIL, SCOUTING AMERICA, TO THE RHODE ISLAND STATE HOUSE ON FEBRUARY 24TH OF 2026, AND JOYFULLY CELEBRATING SCOUTING MONTH IN FEBRUARY {LC3507/1}

Recommended for Immediate Consideration.

Senator Acosta requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

Unanimous consent for immediate consideration is granted.

Senator Acosta moves passage, seconded by The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Appollonio, Bissaillon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Euer, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Murray, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

The resolution is read and passed upon a voice vote.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Upon suggestion of Senators Acosta, Dimitri, Tikoian, de la Cruz, Rogers, Gallo, Lauria and by unanimous consent, the Honorable Senate President, welcomes to the Chamber Isabella Elfering, Jocelyn Goodwin, Liliana St. Pierre, Anthony Brooks, Andre Slinko, Ashton Lapuit, Luca R. De Palo, Massimo A De Palo, Logan DiCola, Benjamin Murro, Nathan Murro, Brady Whitcomb, Alexander Zaluski, Ryan Zaluski, Samuel Hurley, Firat Elci, Kerem Elci, Hannah Bourque, Seth Klaiman, Liam Collins, from the New Harbor Group, and Tim McCandless, Scout Executive and CEO for Narragansett Council – Scouting America.

Upon suggestion of Senator Acosta and by unanimous consent, the Honorable Senate President, welcomes to the Chamber Leon Ernesto Acosta-Chatham, Raices Duel Language Academy and Providence County Wrestling Champ.

IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATIONS**Senate Resolution No. 3141****BY** Murray**ENTITLED**, SENATE RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING MARCH OF 2026, AS "COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC5979/1}

Recommended for Immediate Consideration.

Senator Murray requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

Unanimous consent for immediate consideration is granted.

Senator Murray moves passage, seconded by The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissaillon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Euer, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

The resolution is read and passed upon a voice vote.

Senate Resolution No. 3142**BY** Murray**ENTITLED**, SENATE RESOLUTION CELEBRATING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF SOJOURNER HOUSE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC6177/1}

Recommended for Immediate Consideration.

Senator Murray requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

Unanimous consent for immediate consideration is granted.

Senator Murray moves passage, seconded by The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissaillon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Euer, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

The resolution is read and passed upon a voice vote.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Upon suggestion of Senator Murray and by unanimous consent, the Honorable Senate President, welcomes to the Chamber Vanessa Volz, President and CEO of Sojourner House, and Kersti Yllo former chair, current board member.

Appendix**CONSENT CALENDAR****IN ORDER FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026:**

1. ***The Reappointment of Christopher Fierro to the Labor & Training Board of Review for a term expiring February 1, 2031.***

Committee on Labor & Gaming recommends that the Senate give its Advice and Consent to this nomination.

2. **2026-S 3139**

BY Acosta

ENTITLED, JOINT RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE REPORTING AND EXPIRATION DATES OF THE SPECIAL JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY THE RETURN OF CENTRAL FALLS SCHOOLS TO LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Ordered on the Consent Calendar.

3. **2026-H 7223**

BY Boylan

ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY -- PERMANENT JOINT COMMITTEE ON NAMING ALL NEW BUILDINGS, BRIDGES, EDIFICES AND OTHER STATE CONSTRUCTIONS

Committee on Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs recommends passage in concurrence.

Upon motion of Senator Ciccone, seconded by Senator de la Cruz, the following measures on Today's Consent Calendar, by unanimous consent, are read and passed, upon a roll call vote:

YEAS – 36: The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissailon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Euer, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Murray, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

NAYS – 0:

Appendix

CALENDAR

IN ORDER FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 2026:

- 1. 2026-S 2350**
BY DiPalma
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

Committee on Education recommends passage.

Senator DiPalma moves passage of the act, seconded by The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, Dimitri, DiPalma, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Murray, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, and Zurier.

The act is read and passed, upon a roll call vote, with 36 members voting in the affirmative and 0 members voting in the negative as follows:

YEAS – 36: The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissailon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Euer, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Murray, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

NAYS – 0:

- 2. 2026-S 2110**
BY Lauria
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- CATASTROPHIC ILLNESS IN CHILDREN RELIEF FUND

Committee on Health & Human Services recommends passage.

Senator Lauria moves passage of the act, seconded by The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissailon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Murray, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

The act is read and passed, upon a roll call vote, with 36 members voting in the affirmative and 0 members voting in the negative as follows:

YEAS – 36: The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissailon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, DiMario, Dimitri, DiPalma, Euer, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Murray, Paolino, Patalano, Pearson, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

NAYS – 0:

3. 2026-S 2870**BY** Murray**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- LEAD POISONING PREVENTION ACT

Committee on Health & Human Services recommends passage.

Senator Murray moves passage of the act, seconded by The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissaillon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

The act is read and passed, upon a roll call vote, with 36 members voting in the affirmative and 0 members voting in the negative as follows:

YEAS – 36: The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissaillon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Euer, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Murray, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

NAYS – 0:

4. 2026-S 2871**BY** Murray**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN AND PREGNANT WOMEN

Committee on Health & Human Services recommends passage.

Senator Murray moves passage of the act, seconded by The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Famiglietti, Gallo, Gu, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

The act is read and passed, upon a roll call vote, with 36 members voting in the affirmative and 0 members voting in the negative as follows:

YEAS – 36: The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissaillon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Euer, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Murray, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

NAYS – 0:

5. **2026-S 2873**
BY DiPalma
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PUPILS

Committee on Health & Human Services recommends passage.

Senator DiPalma moves passage of the act, seconded by The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissaillon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Murray, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

The act is read and passed, upon a roll call vote, with 36 members voting in the affirmative and 0 members voting in the negative as follows:

YEAS – 36: The Honorable President Valarie J. Lawson, Senators Acosta, Appollonio, Bell, Bissaillon, Britto, Burke, Ciccone, de la Cruz, Dimitri, DiPalma, Euer, Famiglietti, Felag, Gallo, Gu, Kallman, LaMountain, Lauria, Mack, McKenney, Morgan, Murray, Paolino, Patalano, Raptakis, Quezada, Rogers, Sosnowski, Thompson, Tikoian, Ujifusa, Urso, Valverde, Vargas, and Zurier.

NAYS – 0:

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senator Sosnowski announces that the Senate Committee on Commerce will meet at the Rise of the Senate in Room 212.

Senator Raptakis announces that the Senate Committee on Special Legislation and Veteran's Affairs will meet on Wednesday, March 25th at 4:30pm in Room 313.

Senator Lauria announces that the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services will meet at the Rise of the Senate in the Senate Lounge.

Senator Murray announces that the Senate Committee on Education will meet on Wednesday, March 25th at 4:00pm in Room 211.

Senator Felag announces that the Senate Committee on Finance will meet at the Rise of the Senate in Room 211.

Senator Thompson announces that the Senate Committee on Labor and Gaming will meet on Wednesday, March 25th at 4:00pm in Room 212.

TRANSMITTAL

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

NEW BUSINESS

Senate Bill No. 3143

(Secretary of State)

BY Lawson, Gallo, Sosnowski, Murray, Gu, Urso, Ujifusa, Vargas, Lauria, Kallman**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- RHODE ISLAND VOTING RIGHTS ACT

(Creates the Rhode Island voting rights act to establish procedures to prevent discrimination in the voting process.)

{LC6067/1}

Introduced, referred to the Senate Committee on Judiciary.

**REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND AGRICULTURE**

Chairwoman Sosnowski, from the Committee on Environment and Agriculture, reports back, with recommendation of passage of the following measures:

The Reappointment of Jina N. Petraraca, Esq. to the Narragansett Bay Commission for a term expiring April 1, 2029.

Placed on the Consent Calendar.

The Reappointment of Leonard L. Lopes to the Narragansett Bay Commission for a term expiring April 1, 2029.

Placed on the Consent Calendar.

The Reappointment of Christine M. DiBiase to the Narragansett Bay Commission for a term expiring April 1, 2029.

Placed on the Consent Calendar.

The Reappointment of Mario G. Carlino to the Narragansett Bay Commission for a term expiring April 1, 2029.

Placed on the Consent Calendar.

The Reappointment of Lisa M. Andoscia to the Narragansett Bay Commission for a term expiring April 1, 2029

Placed on the Consent Calendar.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Senator Tikoian, seconded by Senate Majority Leader Ciccone, the Senate adjourns at 4:53 o'clock P.M.

HELENA S. REID
Secretary of the Senate

Appendix

INVOCATION

SENATOR PETER A. APPOLLONIO, JR.

As the spring season begins, we pray that we all be unbound from that which weighs heaviest on our hearts, and that a new season of restoration and revelation begins. We ask for Your guidance in restoring the face of the earth. May we learn to live in harmony, safety and peace. Amen.

Appendix

CONSENT CALENDAR

IN ORDER FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026:

1. ***The Reappointment of Jina N. Petraraca, Esq. to the Narragansett Bay Commission for a term expiring April 1, 2029.***

Committee on Environment & Agriculture recommends that the Senate give its Advice and Consent to this nomination.

2. ***The Reappointment of Leonard L. Lopes to the Narragansett Bay Commission for a term expiring April 1, 2029.***

Committee on Environment & Agriculture recommends that the Senate give its Advice and Consent to this nomination.

3. ***The Reappointment of Christine M. DiBiase to the Narragansett Bay Commission for a term expiring April 1, 2029.***

Committee on Environment & Agriculture recommends that the Senate give its Advice and Consent to this nomination.

4. ***The Reappointment of Mario G. Carlino to the Narragansett Bay Commission for a term expiring April 1, 2029.***

Committee on Environment & Agriculture recommends that the Senate give its Advice and Consent to this nomination.

5. ***The Reappointment of Lisa M. Andoscia to the Narragansett Bay Commission for a term expiring April 1, 2029.***

Committee on Environment & Agriculture recommends that the Senate give its Advice and Consent to this nomination.

Appendix

CALENDAR

IN ORDER FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026:

1. *The Reappointment of Margo Cook to the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees for a term expiring February 1, 2029.*

Committee on Education recommends that the Senate give its Advice and Consent to this nomination.

2. *The Reappointment of Joseph Formicola to the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees for a term expiring February 1, 2029.*

Committee on Education recommends that the Senate give its Advice and Consent to this nomination.

3. *The Reappointment of Vahid Ownjazayeri to the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees for a term expiring February 1, 2029.*

Committee on Education recommends that the Senate give its Advice and Consent to this nomination.

4. *The Reappointment of Thomas M. Ryan to the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees for a term expiring February 1, 2029.*

Committee on Education recommends that the Senate give its Advice and Consent to this nomination.

5. *The Reappointment of Armand E. Sabitoni to the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees for a term expiring February 1, 2029.*

Committee on Education recommends that the Senate give its Advice and Consent to this nomination.

6. **2026-H 7007 as amended**
BY O'Brien
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- MAIL BALLOTS

Committee on Judiciary recommends passage as amended in concurrence.