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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 backstop sale of Fatima, Roger Williams hospitals enacted**

The General Assembly approved and the governor signed legislation to help close the sale of Roger Williams Medical Center and Fatima Hospital to the nonprofit Centurion Foundation and ensure the continued operation of the two safety-net hospitals. The legislation ([2026-H 7408Aaa](#), [2026-S 2340A](#)) would set aside \$18 million in funds from the state’s supplemental “rainy day” fund to assure bond holders of payment if Centurion were to default.

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

- **Kennedy bill would make deed theft a felony**

The House Judiciary Committee heard testimony on legislation ([2026-H 7551](#)) introduced by House Speaker Pro Tempore Brian Patrick Kennedy (D-Dist. 38, Hopkinton, Westerly) that would criminalize deed theft — an increasingly common practice that bold scammers use to actually steal homes and real estate. Deed theft typically involves forged documents, such as a quit claim deed, to record a phony transfer of property ownership.

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- **Ujifusa, Donovan bill would safeguard vaccine access amid federal uncertainty**

Legislation ([2026-S 2379](#), [2026-H 7625](#)) introduced by Sen. Linda L. Ujifusa (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol) and House Health and Human Services Committee Chairwoman Susan R. Donovan (D-Dist. 69, Bristol, Portsmouth) would give Rhode Island a clear statutory framework to ensure vaccines remain accessible, affordable and grounded in public health science by requiring state-regulated health insurers to cover vaccines recommended by the Rhode Island Department of Health without

More...

cost-sharing barriers.

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- **Cotter bill would allow property tax deferment by senior, disabled homeowners**
Rep. Megan L. Cotter (D-Dist. 39, Exeter, Richmond, Hopkinton) has filed legislation to help older Rhode Islanders stay in their homes by allowing deferment of their property taxes until their home changes hands. The legislation ([2026-H 7567](#)) would apply statewide and would be available to those 62 or older and those of any age who are permanently totally disabled or are disabled veterans.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Hopkins introduces bill to ensure fair discounts for RI seniors**
Rep. Marie A. Hopkins (R-Dist. 21, Warwick) introduced legislation ([2026-H 7266](#)) to amend the Senior Savings Protection Act, which aims to promote fairness and financial relief for Rhode Island's senior citizens. The legislation would ensure that businesses offering discounts for automatic payments must extend the same incentives to seniors aged 65 and older who prefer to pay by paper check, while preserving existing cash discounts for cash payments. Sen. Peter A. Appollonio Jr. (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) has introduced the legislation ([2026-S 2430](#)) in the Senate.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Shanley bill would allow app to report cars illegally parked in accessible spaces**
Rep. Evan P. Shanley (D-Dist. 24, Warwick, East Greenwich) has introduced legislation ([2026-H 7050](#)) that would allow people to use an app to report cars that are illegally parked in accessible spaces, as well as update new signage for those spaces. The bill would enable municipalities to participate in the Parking Mobility app program where individuals may submit photos on the app of vehicles that are parked in spaces designated for individuals with disabilities, and the violator may be cited and fined at the discretion of local law enforcement.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Sanchez, Burke bill would pay health care workers Sunday, holiday overtime**
Rep. Enrique George Sanchez (D-Dist. 9, Providence) has introduced legislation ([2026-H 7772](#)) to ensure health care workers earn overtime when working on Sundays and holidays. Senate Labor and Gaming Committee Chairman John P. Burke (D-Dist. 9, West Warwick) will shortly introduce companion legislation in the Senate.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Boylan, Urso introduce bill to allow nurses to provide home foot care**
Rep. Jennifer Boylan (D-Dist. 66, Barrington, East Providence) and Sen. Lori Urso (D-Dist. 8, Pawtucket) have introduced legislation ([2026-H 7029](#), [2026-S 2116](#)) to help homebound patients access routine foot care at home.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Gu, Read introduce bill to add crisis hotline numbers to school IDs**
Sen. Victoria Gu (D-Dist. 38, Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown) and Rep. Earl A. Read III (D-Dist. 26, Coventry, West Warwick, Warwick) have introduced legislation ([2026-S 2348](#), [2026-H 7026](#)) to include the phone numbers of suicide prevention and substance abuse crisis hotlines on student ID cards.

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- **Legislators host candy election to demonstrate ranked-choice voting**
Rep. Rebecca Kislak (D-Dist. 4, Providence), Rep. Jennifer A. Stewart (D-Dist. 59, Pawtucket), Sen. Meghan E. Kallman (D-Dist. 15, Pawtucket, Providence), Sen. Samuel D. Zurier (D-Dist. 3, Providence) and [Ocean State Ranked Choice Voting](#) hosted an election between five types of candy to demonstrate how ranked-choice voting works. The legislators are introducing two bills that would institute ranked-choice voting in Rhode Island: one for presidential preference primaries, starting with the 2028 election; and the other to enable its use for local elections. [Click here to see news release.](#)

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