

March 13, 2026

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>



- **Senate unveils 2026 health care legislation**  
Continuing the Senate’s efforts to stabilize and strengthen Rhode Island’s health care system, Senate President Valarie J. Lawson (D-Dist. 14, East Providence) and Senate Health and Human Services Committee Chairwoman Melissa Murray (D-Dist. 24, Woonsocket, North Smithfield) unveiled a 17-bill package of legislation centered on supporting Rhode Islanders in crisis, protecting patients and providers and strengthening the state’s health workforce.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate OKs Acosta bill seeking right to education in state constitution**  
The Senate passed legislation ([2026-S 2018](#)) sponsored by Sen. Jonathon Acosta (D-Dist. 16, Central Falls, Pawtucket) to place a question on the next statewide ballot asking voters to amend the state constitution to guarantee “an equitable, adequate and meaningful education to each child.” Rep. Mary Duffy Messier (D-Dist. 62, Pawtucket) has introduced the resolution ([2026-H 7453](#)) in the House.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Solomon, McKenney bill would create Office of Elder Advocate**  
Rep. Joseph J. Solomon Jr. (D-Dist. 22, Warwick) and Sen. Mark McKenney (D-Dist. 30, Warwick) have introduced legislation ([2026-H 7995](#), [2026-S 2686](#)) that would create the Office of Elder Advocate, which would be responsible for promoting the rights, dignity and well-being of older Rhode Islanders holistically across settings including issues relating to age discrimination, financial exploitation, housing, access to benefits, guardianship and identifying systemic service gaps.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)

More...

- **Serpa, de la Cruz bill would reduce state income tax rate in phases**  
Rep. Patricia A. Serpa (D-Dist. 27, West Warwick, Coventry) and Senate Minority Leader Jessica de la Cruz (R-Dist. 23, North Smithfield, Burrillville, Glocester) have introduced legislation ([2026-H 7805](#), [2026-S 2672](#)) that would reduce the state income tax rate by an aggregate 10%, phased in equal annual increments over five years, beginning Jan. 1, 2027.  
[Click here for Serpa release.](#)  
[Click here for de la Cruz release.](#)
- **Gu, Cotter introduce bills to cap electric and gas utilities' profits**  
Sen. Victoria Gu (D-Dist. 38, Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown) and Rep. Megan Cotter (D-Dist. 39, Exeter, Richmond, Hopkinton) have introduced legislation ([2026-S 2202](#), [2026-H 7887](#), [2026-S 2777](#), [2026-H 7888](#)) to limit the profits of utilities distributing electricity and natural gas to “just and reasonable” rates.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Marszalkowski introduces bill to protect consumers' wallets and personal data**  
Rep. Alex D. Marszalkowski (D-Dist. 52, Cumberland) has introduced the Surveillance Pricing and Online Retailing Act to protect consumers' personal digital data and wallets when shopping online. The legislation ([2026-H 7849](#)) would prohibit algorithmic price increases for online purchases. Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) has introduced a similar bill ([2026-S 2428](#)) in the Senate.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Slater, Murray highlight low-income and homeless rental subsidy bill**  
Rep. Scott A. Slater (D-Dist. 10, Providence) and Sen. Melissa Murray (D-Dist. 24, Woonsocket, North Smithfield) joined the Housing Network of Rhode Island at the State House to highlight legislation ([2026-H 7803](#), [2026-S 2681](#)) intended to provide more permanent, affordable homes to the most vulnerable Rhode Islanders. The bills call for a state-funded rental subsidy for those experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, who are extremely low-income or disabled with a need for supportive services.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Bill would protect against unfair loss of inherited family homes**  
Sen. Jacob E. Bissaillon (D-Dist. 1, Providence) and Rep. Carol Hagan McEntee (D-Dist. 33, South Kingstown, Narragansett) have introduced legislation to protect Rhode Island families from unfairly losing ownership of property they inherit. The Uniform Partition of Heirs' Property Act ([2026-H 7210](#), [2026-S 2394](#)) establishes due process, notice and first refusal rights when multiple heirs inherit property without a formal estate plan, to prevent involuntary partition sales.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Valverde, Speakman introduce bill allowing portable solar**  
Sen. Bridget Valverde (D-Dist. 35, North Kingstown, East Greenwich, South Kingstown) and Rep. June S. Speakman (D-Dist. 68, Warren, Bristol) have introduced legislation ([2026-S 2359](#), [2026-H 7269](#)) to enable Rhode Islanders — even renters and those without rooftop access — to reduce their electric bills and

generate green energy through small solar arrays that can be plugged into an ordinary outlet.

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

▪ **Vargas bill would create \$650 child tax credit**

Sen. Lammis J. Vargas is proposing a \$650 refundable child tax credit ([2026-S 2823](#)) that would provide relief to families and help reduce child poverty.

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

▪ **Famiglietti bill would increase speeding fines in residential and school zones**

Sen. Stefano Famiglietti (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) has introduced legislation ([2026-S 2718](#)) that would increase fines for speeding in residential and school zones. The increased fines would apply only to traffic stops — not existing speed cameras.

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

-30-

*For an electronic version of this and all press releases published by the Legislative Press and Public Information Bureau, please visit our website at [www.rilegislature.gov/pressrelease](http://www.rilegislature.gov/pressrelease).*