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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>



- **President Ruggiero, Speaker Shekarchi announce hearings on St. Mary's Home**
Senate President Dominick J. Ruggiero (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) and House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) issued statements expressing their deep concern over the serious issues discovered in the Child Advocate's report of St. Mary's Home for Children and announcing that both Senate and House oversight hearings will begin shortly. "Protecting our most vulnerable children, and ensuring they have access to essential treatment and services in our state, remains an absolute top priority for me and the entire Senate," said President Ruggiero.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Corvese bill would create open primaries**
Rep. Arthur Corvese (D-Dist. 55, North Providence) has introduced legislation to establish open primaries for state and municipal elections to ensure that the candidates who take office are supported by a majority of voters. Under the bill ([2024-H 7117](#)), the party primary system would be replaced with a "general primary" in which all declared candidates are listed. The top two vote-getters in the primary for each office would then face off in the general election.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **McNamara looks to get Warwick representation on Airport Corporation board**
Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) has introduced legislation that would require Warwick representation on the Rhode Island Airport Corporation Board of Directors. The bill ([2024-H 7069](#)) would require that one of the seven directors of the Rhode Island Airport Corporation be appointed by the mayor of

More...

Warwick with the advice and consent of the Rhode Island Senate.

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- **Edwards bill would prohibit development of Sapowet Marsh Management Area**
Rep. John G. Edwards (D-Dist. 70, Tiverton) has introduced legislation ([2024-H 7060](#)) that would protect the Sapowet Marsh Management Area in Tiverton and prohibit any commercial development on the 296-acre salt marsh. The bill would designate the area as open space to be utilized only for passive outdoor recreation.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Euer appointed to EPA advisory committee**
Senate Judiciary Committee Chairwoman Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) was appointed to the Local Government Advisory Committee of the Environmental Protection Agency, an independent committee that advises the EPA administrator on specific environmental questions or topics that critically impact local government. For the first time in the committee's history, women hold a majority of membership seats and all of the committee's leadership positions.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senators take part in White House event on investments in Rhode Island**
Senate Finance Committee Chairman Louis P. DiPalma (D-Dist. 12, Middletown, Newport, Little Compton, Tiverton), Senate Judiciary Committee Chairwoman Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown), Sen. Pamela J. Lauria (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) and Sen. Victoria Gu (D-Dist. 38, Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown) took part in a White House event highlighting the impacts of major federal investments being made in Rhode Island and Connecticut.
[Click here to see news release for Aquidneck Island/East Bay senators.](#)
[Click here to see news release for Senator Gu.](#)
- **Cano to participate in AFL-CIO MLK Day Human Rights Conference**
Sen. Sandra Cano, chairwoman of the Senate Education Committee, will be a panel member at the 2024 AFL-CIO Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Civil and Human Rights Conference held in Montgomery, Alabama. The conference will be held from Jan. 12 to 14. Chairwoman Cano (D-Dist. 8, Pawtucket) will participate in a panel discussion entitled "Democracy's Front Lines: Power in Our Nation's State Legislatures" and she will speak to the rising levels of extremism within the political process and how it has affected Rhode Island, particularly public schools.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Commission's annual celebration to be held Jan. 15**
The Martin Luther King Jr. State Holiday Commission will be holding its annual celebration of the life, and death, of the great civil rights leader on Monday, Jan. 15. The official holiday commemoration will include remarks by commission members, state and religious leaders, several musical presentations, and a number of awards will be presented. Rep. Raymond A. Hull (D-Dist. 6, Providence, North Providence), who chairs the commission that annually organizes and hosts the celebration, will serve as master of ceremonies.
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