

Jan. 30, 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>



- **Legislative commission recommends creation of medical school at URI**  
A legislative commission led by Sen. Pamela J. Lauria (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) and URI President Marc Parlange [recommended](#) the establishment of a medical school at the University of Rhode Island to create a permanent pipeline of doctors as one of several steps that should be taken to address an ever-growing shortage of primary care physicians.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Lawmakers introduce bills to support sale of Roger Williams and Fatima**  
Speaker of the House K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) and Senate President Valarie J. Lawson (D-Dist. 14, East Providence), along with Gov. Daniel J. McKee and Attorney General Peter F. Neronha, announced the introduction of legislation to support the potential sale of Roger Williams Medical Center and Fatima Hospital. The first ([2026-H 7408](#), [2026-S 2340](#)) would authorize \$18 million in state funding to assist Centurion. The second ([2026-H 7407](#), [2026-S 2339](#)) would allow for an expedited Hospital Conversions Act should Centurion fail to close and an alternative purchaser is identified.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Kennedy bill would regulate burgeoning data center industry in Rhode Island**  
House Speaker Pro Tempore Brian Patrick Kennedy (D-Dist. 38, Hopkinton, Westerly) has introduced legislation ([2026-H 7331](#)) that would implement state regulations on data centers being built in Rhode Island, preventing data center operators from passing their electricity costs onto residential and other business

More...

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- **Zurier introduces bills to fund RIPTA, audit RIDOT**  
Sen. Samuel D. Zurier (D-Dist. 3, Providence) has introduced bills ([2026-S 2095](#), [2026-S 2124](#)) to direct more highway maintenance funds to the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority and to perform an efficiency and performance audit of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Dimitri introduces bill to improve school safety statewide**  
Sen. Andrew R. Dimitri (D-Dist. 25, Johnston) has introduced legislation ([2026-S 2209](#)) to improve safety at Rhode Island's public schools by establishing a school emergency response committee to develop statewide facility safety and emergency response standards.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Bill would enable abuse survivors to exit rental leases**  
With support from the Rhode Island Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Sen. Melissa Murray (D-Dist. 24, Woonsocket, North Smithfield) and Rep. Karen Alzate (D-Dist. 60, Pawtucket, Central Falls) announced their legislation ([2026-S 2291](#), [2026-H 7199](#)) to allow abuse survivors to terminate a rental lease early without penalty or liability for rent.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. O'Brien and Sen. Felag attend event to increase earned income tax credit**  
Rep. William W. O'Brien (D-Dist. 54, North Providence) and Sen. Walter S. Felag Jr. (D-Dist. 10, Warren, Bristol, Tiverton) attended an event held by United Way Rhode Island at the State House to highlight the importance of the Earned Income Tax Credit. Both legislators will be introducing legislation to raise the state's earned income tax credit to 30 percent.  
[Click here to see news release](#)
- **Ujifusa, Boylan legislation would make polluters pay**  
Sen. Linda L. Ujifusa (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol) and Rep. Jennifer Boylan (D-Dist. 66, Barrington, East Providence) have reintroduced legislation ([2026-H 7004](#), [2026-S 2024](#)) requiring the largest fossil fuel companies to pay for climate-related damage already affecting Rhode Island's infrastructure, public health and economy — costs that are currently borne by taxpayers and local governments.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Mack, Kallman and McGaw attend day of solidarity in Minnesota**  
On Jan. 29, Sens. Tiara Mack (D-Dist. 6, Providence), Meghan E. Kallman (D-Dist. 15, Pawtucket, Providence) and Rep. Michelle McGaw (D-Dist. 71, Portsmouth, Tiverton, Little Compton) joined more than 50 legislators from 15 states to gather in person at the Minnesota State Capitol for a day of solidarity with their Minnesota colleagues. The event, organized by state legislators in partnership with State Futures, confronted increasingly authoritarian tactics and the escalation of force against Minnesota residents in the wake of the killings of Renée Good and Alex

Pretti by federal agents. Additionally, Senate Majority Leader Frank A. Ciccone, III (D-Dist. 7, Providence, Johnston) announced that he is working on legislation requiring federal immigration agents operating in Rhode Island to comply fully with the United States Constitution.

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

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

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