

Feb. 10, 2023

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>



- **McNamara, Miller bill would protect frozen embryos, regulate storage**
Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) and Sen. Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) introduced the Embryo Safety and Storage Act of 2023 ([2023-H 5177](#), [2023-S 0096](#)), which would require the Department of Health to regulate and license embryo storage facilities.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Shanley bill would provide data transparency and protect online privacy**
Rep. Evan P. Shanley (D-Dist. 24, Warwick, East Greenwich) introduced the Rhode Island Data Transparency and Privacy Protection Act ([2023-H 5354](#)), which would require online service providers and commercial websites that collect, store and sell personally identifiable information to disclose what categories of information they collect and to what third parties they sell the information.
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- **Bennett bill would ban restaurants from using disposable foam containers**
Rep. David Bennett (D-Dist. 20, Warwick, Cranston) has introduced legislation ([2023 H-5090](#)) to ban food service establishments from using disposable polystyrene foam containers. Similar legislation ([2023-S 0014](#)) has been introduced in the Senate by Sen. Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence).
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- **McGaw and Ujifusa work together to introduce environmental legislation**
Rep. Michelle E. McGaw (D-Dist. 71, Portsmouth, Tiverton, Little Compton) and Sen. Linda Ujifusa (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol) are sponsoring three bills to

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protect Rhode Island's environment. One bill ([2023-S 0031](#), [2023-H 5142](#)) would prohibit building new high-heat waste processing facilities. A second ([2023-S 0061](#), [2023-H 5172](#)) would prohibit the Energy Facility Siting Board from approving new energy projects that would negatively impact the state's ability to reach its Act on Climate obligations. A third ([2023-S 0030](#), [2023-H 5198](#)) requires 50% of new light duty, non-emergency vehicles purchased or leased by the state to be electric, zero-emission vehicles by 2031.

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- **Rep. Morales introduces bill to fund lead service line replacements**
Rep. David Morales (D-Dist. 7, Providence) has introduced legislation ([2023-H 5318](#)) that would replace lead public and private drinking water service lines across the state at no cost to property owners or tenants. Similar legislation ([2023-S 0002](#)) has been introduced in the Senate by President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence).
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- **Sen. Gu introduces bill expanding Medicaid for seniors**
Sen. Victoria Gu (D-Dist. 38, Charlestown, Westerly, South Kingstown) has introduced legislation increasing the income eligibility threshold for seniors to be eligible for Medicaid. The bill aims to help seniors pay for medical costs that Medicare does not cover such as prescriptions, dental care and vision by raising the eligibility cutoff to 138% of the federal poverty line. Similar legislation ([2023 H-5097](#)) has been introduced in the House by Rep. David Morales (D-Dist. 7, Providence).
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- **Morales, Chippendale introduce legislation to lower prescription drug costs**
Rep. David Morales (D-Dist. 7, Providence) and House Minority Leader Michael Chippendale (R-Dist. 40, Foster, Glocester, Coventry) have introduced legislation ([2023-H 5350](#)) to limit the out-of-pocket expenses of specialty prescription drugs for insured people to \$150 per 30-day supply. Specialty drugs are often lifesaving treatments, but even for patients with health insurance, copays can be up to \$2,500 per month.
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- **Sanchez bill would allow municipalities to extend voting rights to non-citizens**
Rep. Enrique Sanchez (D-Dist. 9, Providence) has introduced enabling legislation ([2023-H 5461](#)) that would allow cities and towns to expand voting rights in municipal elections to all residents, regardless of immigration status. Voting rights for non-citizens would be limited to the municipal level, meaning these individuals could not vote for state or federal offices.
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- **Senate commission to study non-plurality voting**
Under a resolution ([2023-S 0046](#)) sponsored by Sen. Samuel Zurier (D-Dist. 3, Providence) and passed by the Senate, a new Senate commission will study the possibilities of non-plurality voting and runoff elections for primaries for the General

Assembly members and the state's five general officers.

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