

April 3, 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 OKs Ciccone bill to reduce requirement to qualify for in-state tuition**  
The Senate passed legislation sponsored by Majority Leader Frank A. Ciccone III (D-Dist. 7, Providence, Johnston) that would reduce the Rhode Island residency requirement for students to be eligible for in-state tuition. The legislation ([2026-S 2650](#)) would amend the Student Success Act to reduce the time a student must have been a resident of Rhode Island in order to qualify for in-state tuition, from three years to one year. The bill now heads to the House for consideration, where Rep. Grace Diaz (D-Dist. 11, Providence) has introduced the legislation ([2026-H 8252](#)). [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate approves Patalano bill to keep sex offenders 300 feet away from schools**  
The Senate voted to approve legislation ([2026-S 2281](#)) sponsored by Sen. Todd M. Patalano (D-Dist. 26, Cranston) to clarify the law restricting the residence of sex offenders near schools. The bill now moves to the House, where Rep. Richard R. Fascia (R-Dist. 42, Johnston, Cranston) has introduced companion legislation ([2026-H 8065](#)). [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate passes Ujifusa bill banning ‘spread pricing’ for drugs in Medicaid plans**  
The Senate approved legislation sponsored by Sen. Linda L. Ujifusa (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol) to prohibit the use of spread pricing by managed care organizations that manage Medicaid health plans. Spread pricing is a practice used by pharmacy benefits managers to charge health plans more for a prescription drug than they reimburse to the pharmacy — and then keep the difference or “spread.” The bill ([2026-S 2462](#)) now goes to the House, where Rep. Jennifer A. Stewart (D-Dist. 59,

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Pawtucket) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2026-H 7825](#)).

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- **Senate OKs bill to clear Medicaid roadblocks for antipsychotics, anticonvulsants**  
The Senate approved legislation sponsored by Sen. Jacob E. Bissailon (D-Dist. 1, Providence) to prohibit the Rhode Island Medicaid program and the managed care organizations contracted by it from requiring prior authorization or step therapy for coverage of any drug classified as an antipsychotic or anticonvulsant. The bill ([2026-S 2385](#)) now goes to the House, where Rep. Stephen M. Casey (D-Dist. 50, Woonsocket) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2026-H 7587](#)).  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **President Lawson, Whip Kazarian, advocates highlight R.I. Voting Rights Act**  
Senate President Valarie J. Lawson (D-Dist. 14, East Providence), House Majority Whip Katherine S. Kazarian (D-Dist. 63, East Providence, Pawtucket) and the Rhode Island Voting Access Coalition held an event to urge state lawmakers to pass a state Voting Rights Act now, due to consistent attacks on voting rights in the courts and at the federal level. The legislation ([2026-S 3143](#), [2026-H 8334](#)) would establish procedures to prevent discrimination in the voting process.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **McNamara, Gallo bill would revamp education funding in Rhode Island**  
House Education Committee Chairman Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) and Senate Education Committee Chairwoman Hanna M. Gallo (D-Dist. 27, Cranston, West Warwick) have introduced the Rhode Island Education Funding and Accountability Act ([2026-H 8351](#), [2026-S 3015](#)), which would establish a comprehensive, transparent and student-centered funding formula for all Rhode Island public schools, distribute resources equitably based on instructional need and ensure that municipalities contribute according to their fiscal capacity.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **As legislators and moms, reps offer bills to protect kids from digital harm**  
Representatives Tina L. Spears (D-Dist. 36, Charlestown, New Shoreham, South Kingstown, Westerly), Justine Caldwell (D-Dist. 30, East Greenwich, West Greenwich) and Megan L. Cotter (D-Dist. 39, Exeter, Richmond, Hopkinton) — all mothers of teens and children — hosted an event to highlight a package of legislation they have introduced to address growing concerns around social media use and digital technology use by establishing new safeguards designed to reduce risks such as exposure to harmful content, exploitation and adverse mental health impacts among young users.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Bill aims to prevent private equity from buying up R.I. housing**  
Sen. Meghan E. Kallman (D-Dist. 15, Pawtucket, Providence) and Rep. Michelle McGaw (D-Dist. 71, Portsmouth, Tiverton, Little Compton) are sponsoring legislation aimed at preventing private equity firms from buying up large swaths of the state's housing, as they have in some other parts of the country. The bill ([2026-S 2902](#), [2026-H 8102](#)) would prohibit a legal entity, other than an individual, that owns more than \$25 million in real estate from owning single- or multi-family properties.

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- **Gu, Carson bill would modernize identity theft protection laws**  
Legislation ([2026-S 2638](#), [2026-H 7509](#)) from Sen. Victoria Gu (D-Dist. 38, Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown) and Lauren H. Carson (D-Dist. 75, Newport) aims to modernize cybersecurity laws to better protect the personally identifiable information of Rhode Islanders.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
  
- **LaMountain, Casimiro, safety advocates host Intelligent Speed Assist event**  
Sen. Matthew L. LaMountain (D-Dist. 31, Warwick, Cranston), Rep. Julie A. Casimiro (D-Dist. 31, North Kingstown, Exeter) and the Providence Streets Coalition and Families for Safe Streets hosted an event to showcase the technology that is central to the Stop Super Speeders Accountability Act ([2026-S 2942](#), [2026-H 8098](#)). The legislation would hold the worst offenders of speeding and reckless driving accountable with Intelligent Speed Assistance, a device that limits vehicle speed to the posted speed limits.  
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