

April 17, 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>



- **Assembly passes Baginski, Burke bill to move primary election day**
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2026-H 7049aa](#), [2026-S 2147A](#)) sponsored by Rep. Jacquelyn Baginski (D-Dist. 17, Cranston) and Sen. John P. Burke (D-Dist. 9, West Warwick) that would move the day of primary elections from Tuesday to Wednesday if the statutorily mandated Tuesday election date immediately follows Labor Day. The legislation now heads to the governor's desk for consideration.
- **House approves bill to protect students' privacy when using tech for school**
The House approved legislation ([2026-H 7032](#)) sponsored by Rep. June S. Speakman (D-Dist. 67, Warren, Bristol) that would protect the privacy of students and families when using laptops and other devices for school work or virtual learning by limiting when public schools or third parties such as software providers can activate or access audio, video or recordings on public school students' institutional or personal electronic devices. The bill now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Bridget Valverde (D-Dist. 35, North Kingstown, East Greenwich, South Kingstown) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2026-S 2786](#)).
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- **House OKs Solomon bill to expand collaborative pharmacy practices**
The House of Representatives approved legislation ([2026-H 7424](#)) introduced by Rep. Joseph J. Solomon Jr. (D-Dist. 22, Warwick) that would expand collaborative pharmacy agreements to include nonphysician health care providers. A collaborative pharmacy agreement is when licensed pharmacists with advanced training and experience agree to work in collaboration with physicians for the purpose of drug therapy management of patients. The measure now moves to the Senate, where

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similar legislation ([2026-S 2866](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Bridget Valverde (D-Dist. 35, North Kingstown, East Greenwich, South Kingstown).

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- **House OKs Carson bill to strengthen food waste diversion in school cafeterias**
The House approved legislation ([2026-H 7342](#)) sponsored by Rep. Lauren H. Carson (D-Dist. 75, Newport) to require all school food service contracts to include provisions mandating the composting or recycling of organic waste, require the public disclosure of schools' waste audits that detail its efforts to reduce waste, and codify the use of "share tables" where unopened, unwanted food can be left for someone else. The bill now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Bridget Valverde (D-Dist. 35, North Kingstown, East Greenwich, South Kingstown) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2026-S 2438](#)).
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- **Senate passes Tikoian bill renaming drug court to 'recovery court'**
The Senate passed legislation ([2026-S 3099](#)) introduced by Senate Majority Whip David P. Tikoian (D-Dist. 22, Smithfield, Lincoln, North Providence) that would change the name of the state's drug court to the "recovery court." The term is more in line with the state's goal of bringing stability to the lives of those who suffer from addiction, focusing on recovery rather than punishment. The measure now moves to the House of Representatives where similar legislation ([2026-H 8247](#)) has been introduced by Rep. Julie Casimiro (D-Dist. 31, North Kingstown, Exeter).
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- **House approves Rep. Tanzi bill to disclose AI use in health care visits**
The House voted to approve legislation ([2026-H 7538](#)) from Rep. Teresa A. Tanzi (D-Dist. 34, South Kingstown, Narragansett) to require health care providers and facilities to notify patients if they use artificial intelligence tools to document visits. The bill now goes to the Senate for consideration, where Sen. Pamela J. Lauria (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) has introduced companion legislation ([2026-S 2570](#)).
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- **House approves creation of commission to study sludge disposal**
The House approved legislation ([2026-H 7532Aaa](#)) sponsored by Rep. Terri Cortvriend (D-Dist. 72, Portsmouth, Middletown) that would establish a special joint legislative commission to study Rhode Island's growing biosolids disposal challenges. The effort is aimed at facilitating the development of a comprehensive, statewide solution to the increasingly limited options for disposal of biosolids or sludge — the solid, semisolid or liquid waste generated from wastewater treatment plants as well as facilities that treat water supplies or control air pollution. The joint resolution goes to the Senate.
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- **Newberry introduces the Rhode Island Business Climate Reform Act**
Rep. Brian C. Newberry (R-Dist. 48, North Smithfield, Burrillville) introduced the Business Climate Reform Act ([2026-H 8450](#)), which would significantly restructure Rhode Island corporate law with the goal of stimulating the economic climate while

at the same time providing new state revenue streams. Similar legislation ([2026-S 2761](#)) has been introduced in the Senate by Minority Leader Jessica de la Cruz (R-Dist. 23, North Smithfield, Burrillville, Gloucester).

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- **DiMario, Fogarty introduce bill to address loopholes in campaign finance law**
Sen. Alana M. DiMario (D-Dist. 36, Narragansett, North Kingstown, New Shoreham) and Rep. Kathleen A. Fogarty (D-Dist. 35, South Kingstown) have introduced legislation ([2026-S 2720](#), [2026-H 7450](#)) that would close a variety of loopholes in state campaign finance law.

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- **Librarians speak up for bill guaranteeing access to school libraries, librarians**
Senate President Pro Tempore Hanna M. Gallo (D-Dist. 27, Cranston, West Warwick) and Rep. Rebecca Kislak (D-Dist. 4, Providence) were joined by members of the Rhode Island Library Association and School Librarians of Rhode Island at a State House event calling for passage of their bill ([2026-S 2078](#), [2026-H 7417](#)) to ensure every student has the benefits of a school library staffed by a certified school librarian.

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