

April 25, 2025

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 President Dominick Ruggerio passes away**
The Senate announced the passing of President Dominick J. Ruggerio earlier this week. He was 76. First elected to the Senate in 1984, he was elected president in March 2017. He previously served as majority leader since Nov. 10, 2010. Before his Senate service, he served in the House of Representatives from 1981 to 1984. Out of respect for President Ruggerio, all Senate business, including session and committees, was canceled this week. His funeral will take place Monday.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House OKs Serpa bill to increase penalties for certain driving offenses**
The House of Representatives approved legislation ([2025-H 5638](#)) introduced by Rep. Patricia A. Serpa (D-Dist. 27, West Warwick, Coventry) that would provide for increased penalties for individuals who fail to stop at an accident resulting in personal injury or death; driving so as to endanger, resulting in death; and driving under the influence of liquor or drugs, resulting in death. The measure now moves to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2025-S 0298](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Leonidas P. Raptakis (D-Dist. 33, Coventry, West Greenwich).
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House OKs Noret bill to add five violations to definition of aggressive driving**
The House of Representatives approved legislation ([2025-H 5899](#)) introduced by Rep. Thomas E. Noret (D-Dist. 25, Coventry, West Warwick) that would add five driving violations to the statute that defines aggressive driving, including laws pertaining to obedience to police officers, overtaking on left, clearance for overtaking, places where overtaking is prohibited and laned roadways. The measure now moves

More...

to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2025-S 0556](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Andrew R. Dimitri (D-Dist. 25, Johnston).

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

- **House passes McGaw bill to allow 60-day prescriptions for ADHD medications**
The House approved legislation ([2025-H 5866A](#)) sponsored by Rep. Michelle McGaw (D-Dist. 71, Portsmouth, Tiverton, Little Compton) to help relieve a burden on patients, parents and physicians by doubling the amount of non-opioid, non-narcotic Schedule II prescription drugs — including most commonly prescribed ADHD medications — that can be dispensed at one time. The legislation would allow up to a 60-day supply of such drugs to be dispensed. The bill now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Alana M. DiMario (D-Dist. 36, Narragansett, North Kingstown, New Shoreham) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2025-S 0795](#)).
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House OKs Boylan bill to extend deadline for candidates to request a recount**
The House voted to approve a bill ([2025-H 5384](#)) from Rep. Jennifer Boylan (D-Dist. 66, Barrington, East Providence) to extend the deadline for candidates to request a recount so that all overseas ballots are counted before the deadline passes. The bill now heads to the Senate, where Sen. Pamela J. Lauria (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) has introduced companion legislation ([2025-S 0541](#)).
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House OKs bill lifting 3-month limit on pharmacist-prescribed contraception**
The House approved legislation sponsored by Rep. Edith H. Ajello (D-Dist. 1, Providence) to eliminate a three-month limit on hormonal contraceptives that are prescribed by pharmacists. The legislation ([2025-H 6038](#)) would amend a law adopted in 2023 to make contraceptives more accessible, particularly at a time when the state's shortage of primary care providers is making doctor's appointments more difficult to get. The legislation now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Meghan E. Kallman (D-Dist. 15, Pawtucket, Providence) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2025-S 0476](#)).
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House OKs bill to promote strong school mental and behavioral health policies**
The House passed legislation ([2025-H 5165A](#)) sponsored by Rep. Megan L. Cotter (D-Dist. 39, Exeter, Richmond, Hopkinton) to require each school committee to establish a Student Safety and Behavioral Health Committee (SSBHC) charged with ensuring that the district has a comprehensive policy to provide mental health support to students in need and to address student behaviors to minimize disruptions. The bill now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Peter A. Appollonio Jr. (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2025-S 0235](#)).
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **McEntee introduces bottle bill**
Rep. Carol Hagan McEntee (D-Dist. 33, South Kingstown, Narragansett) has introduced legislation ([2025-H 6207](#)) that would drastically increase recycling rates in Rhode Island, particularly with food and beverage waste. The legislation was based on recommendations from the Special Joint Legislative Commission to Study and

Provide Recommendations to Protect our Environment and Natural Resources from Plastic Bottle Waste. Representative McEntee was a co-chair of the commission. The bill has been referred to the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee. Sen. Mark McKenney (D-Dist. 30, Warwick) was the other co-chair of the commission and is expected to introduce the legislation in the Senate.

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

▪ **O'Brien bill would keep funds at public institutions for dual enrollment**

Rep. William W. O'Brien (D-Dist. 54, North Providence) has introduced legislation ([2025-H 6058](#)) that would clarify that only public institutions of higher education are eligible to participate in the state's dual enrollment education program. The program allows students to enroll at a college or university as non-degree students at no cost to the student, and have the courses be recognized toward degree completion at both the college and high school level. The bill has been referred to the House Education Committee, and Sen. John P. Burke (D-Dist. 9, West Warwick) has introduced the legislation ([2025-S 0889](#)) in the Senate.

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

▪ **Bills would help patients with mental health and substance use disorders**

Sen. Linda L. Ujifusa (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol) and Rep. Teresa A. Tanzi (D-Dist. 34, South Kingstown, Narragansett) have introduced two bills to address roadblocks faced by those with mental health or substance abuse needs: one requiring insurers to use generally accepted standards of care when making decisions about whether to pay for behavioral health treatment ([2025-S 0193](#), [2025-H 6061](#)), and another preventing insurers from requiring that patients obtain prior authorization before seeking in-network mental health or substance use disorder health care ([2025-S 0054](#), [2025-H 5432](#)).

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

-30-

For an electronic version of this and all press releases published by the Legislative Press and Public Information Bureau, please visit our website at www.rilegislature.gov/pressrelease.