

April 24, 2015

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.rilin.state.ri.us/News/>



- **Governor signs campaign finance reform into law**

Gov. Gina M. Raimondo signed four pieces of legislation aimed at strengthening campaign finance reform. House Majority Leader John J. DeSimone's (D-Dist. 5, Providence) bill ([2015 H-5789A](#)) requires the filing of bank statements with the Board of Elections. Rep. Robert E. Craven's (D-Dist. 32, North Kingstown) bill ([2015-H 5840A](#)) requires separate campaign accounts. Rep. Joy Hearn's (D-Dist. 66, Barrington, East Providence) bill ([2015-H 5920A](#)) requires a treasurer. Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Michael J. McCaffrey's (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) bill ([2015-S 0681A](#)) combines and mirrors the three House bills. [Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Twin River Casino hotel legislation signed into law**

Gov. Gina M. Raimondo signed legislation to clear the path for a hotel at the Twin River Casino in Lincoln. Both chambers of the General Assembly gave final passage to the companion bills on Thursday, April 16. Rep. Jeremiah T. O'Grady (D-Dist. 46, Lincoln, Pawtucket) sponsored the House bill ([2015-H 5798aa](#)) and Sen. Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence) introduced the Senate bill ([2015-S 0649A](#)) that removes a provision in the 2005 public laws prohibiting construction of a hotel at the gaming venue. The new law provides that construction of a hotel will remain subject to Town of Lincoln zoning ordinances. [Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Working group proposes Medicaid savings measures**

A working group that includes Senate Health and Human Services Committee Chairman Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) and Sen. Louis P.

More...

DiPalma (D-Dist. 12, Middletown, Little Compton, Newport, Tiverton) identified \$85.5 million in potential Medicaid savings for the state. The list of potential savings measures, which includes cuts to hospital and nursing home reimbursement rates offset in part by incentives, will be refined by April 30 and will be nonbinding to the General Assembly and the governor.

- **Construction complete on Pell Bridge barrier sought by Paiva Weed, Ruggiero**
Construction of a median barrier on the Claiborne Pell Bridge — called for by successful legislation sponsored last year by President of the Senate M. Teresa Paiva Weed (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) and Rep. Deborah Ruggiero (D-Dist. 74, Jamestown, Middletown) — is now complete, a month ahead of schedule. The legislators sought the barrier to prevent the sort of head-on collisions that have claimed three lives in recent years on the span that connects Jamestown and Newport.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Nardolillo bill would change minimum corporate tax**
Rep. Robert A. Nardolillo III (R-Dist. 28, Coventry) has submitted legislation that would alter the minimum corporate tax. The first bill ([2015-H 5549](#)) would eliminate the \$500 minimum corporate tax altogether for corporations with fewer than 50 employees. The second bill ([2015-H 5562](#)) would change the minimum corporate tax for those corporations with more than 50 employees from \$500 to \$250.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate honors Bannister House on 125th anniversary**
The Rhode Island Senate honored Bannister House of Providence on the 125th anniversary of its founding in 1890. Introduced by Sen. Harold M. Metts (D-Dist. 6, Providence), the Senate resolution ([2015-S 0852](#)) praised the facility and its caring and compassionate staff for doing its best to take care of vulnerable, low-income Rhode Islanders in need of quality long-term care. The resolution also urged the governor to call a meeting of stakeholders to explore ways to keep the facility open as it attempts to resolve its current financial crisis.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Legislators work to keep guns out of the hands of violent domestic abusers**
Two members of the House of Representatives are continuing their call for passage of bills that would prohibit violent domestic abusers from owning, buying or possessing firearms. Heard by the House Committee on Judiciary and held for further study are a bill by Rep. Gregg Amore (D-Dist. 65, East Providence) ([2015-H 5872](#)), supported by the Office of the Attorney General, that bars firearms for any individual who has been convicted of a misdemeanor crime involving domestic violence, and a bill by Rep. Teresa Tanzi (D-Dist. 34, South Kingstown, Narragansett) ([2015-H 5655](#)) that would bar gun possession by domestic abusers and also mandate that persons subject to protective orders due to domestic abuse be compelled to turn in their guns.
[Click here to see Amore release.](#)
[Click here to see Tanzi release.](#)
- **House Speaker, Senate President comment on Newport Grand proposal**
This week, the owners of Newport Grand unveiled a proposal to move operations

from the city of Newport to the town of Tiverton. House Speaker Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) said of the plan, “Gaming is the state’s third largest source of revenue and we must do all we can to protect it against the impending competition from Massachusetts. Therefore, I support Twin River’s proposal to relocate Newport Grand to Tiverton.” Senate President M. Teresa Paiva Weed (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) stated, “I support Twin River’s plan to have a conversation with the residents of Tiverton to explore the possibility of relocation, and I am grateful for their public commitment to a planning process to ensure the highest and best use of the land in Newport.”

- **‘Governor for a Day’ joins Senate President in Newport groundbreaking**
Khatima Bulmer, a fifth-grader from Newport’s Thompson Middle School who won the “governor-for-a-day” contest, joined Senate President M. Teresa Paiva Weed (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) for the groundbreaking of the new Saint Clare facility in Newport. In 2010, legislation was passed that set the stage for more home-like settings in nursing care facilities, such as what is being developed at St. Clare-Newport. Also attending were Gov. Gina M. Raimondo and Rep. Marvin L. Abney (D-Dist. 73, Newport, Middletown).

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