April 21, 2017

Legislative Press Bureau at (401) 528-1743

### State House view from the southThis 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](http://sp2019:8090/pressrelease/_layouts/RIL.PressRelease.ListStructure/Forms/DisplayForm.aspx)

* **Sen. Miller bill would use Medicaid funds for housing to improve health**

Modeled after an innovative bill introduced this year in Hawaii, legislation ([2017-S 0745](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/billtext17/senatetext17/s0254.pdf)) sponsored by Senate Health and Human Services Committee Chairman Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) would launch a pilot program to test the use of Medicaid funds to treat chronic homelessness.  
[Click here to see news release.](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText17/SenateText17/S0676.pdf?List=c8baae31-3c10-431c-8dcd-9dbbe21ce3e9&ID=12713)

* **Rep. Walsh bill would raise tipped wage, link it to standard minimum wage**

Rep. Moira Walsh (D-Dist. 3, Providence) is sponsoring legislation ([2017-H 5315](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/billtext17/senatetext17/s0121.pdf)) to increase the minimum wage for tipped workers by 50 cents a year until it reaches a level that is at least two-thirds of the standard minimum wage, then ensure that it increases proportionately along with the standard minimum wage.

[Click here to see news release](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText16/HouseText16/H8308A.pdf?List=c8baae31-3c10-431c-8dcd-9dbbe21ce3e9&ID=12722).

* **Minority Whip Filippi introduces constitutional reforms**  
  House Minority Whip Blake Filippi (R-Dist. 36, New Shoreham, Charlestown, South Kingstown, Westerly) introduced three constitutional amendments. House resolution ([2017-H 5401](http://sp2019:8090/pressrelease/)) would empower the people of Rhode Island to take the government to court over unlawful spending. House resolution ([2017-H 5541](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText17/SenateText17/S0745.pdf)) would require all substantive executive branch regulations to be approved by the General Assembly before going into effect. House resolution ([2017-H 5513](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText17/HouseText17/H6001.pdf)) would create a system of instant run-off elections for all general officers and members of the General Assembly. This will ensure that candidates are elected with a majority vote, rather than plurality vote.  
  [Click here to see news release](http://sp2019:8090/pressrelease/_layouts/RIL.PressRelease.ListStructure/Forms/DisplayForm.aspx?List=c8baae31-3c10-431c-8dcd-9dbbe21ce3e9&ID=12706).

* **Rep. Ucci, Rep. Winfield target taxes on car and truck owners**  
  Rep. Stephen R. Ucci (D-Dist. 42, Johnston, Cranston) and Rep. Thomas Winfield (D-Dist. 53, Smithfield, Glocester) have introduced bills taking aim at automobile taxes that they believe are unjust. The bills would require cities and towns to use the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) trade-in value for motor vehicles for purposes of the excise tax ([2017-H 5250](http://sp2019:8090/pressrelease/_layouts/RIL.PressRelease.ListStructure/Forms/DisplayForm.aspx)); treat pickup trucks the same as other passenger vehicles for the purposes of reducing sales tax liability by the trade-in value ([2017-H 5328](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText17/HouseText17/H5401.pdf)); and prohibit the collection of sales tax on any portion of a lease payment that is charged to pay for excise taxes. Companion legislation ([2017-S 0254](http://sp2019:8090/pressrelease/_layouts/RIL.PressRelease.ListStructure/Forms/DisplayForm.aspx), [2017-S 0121](http://sp2019:8090/pressrelease/_layouts/RIL.PressRelease.ListStructure/Forms/DisplayForm.aspx)) to the pickup truck bill has been filed in the Senate by Sen. James E. Doyle II (D-Dist. 8, Pawtucket) and Sen. Leonidas P. Raptakis (D-Dist. 33, Coventry, West Greenwich, East Greenwich).
* **RI to use MCAS test for students after comprehensive study**

Last legislative session, Rep. Gregg Amore’s (D-Dist. 65, East Providence) bill ([2016-H 8308A](http://sp2019:8090/pressrelease/)) that authorized a comprehensive study on a unified approach to statewide education passed the General Assembly. As a result of the study, Rhode Island will now administer the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test to Rhode Island students in the third through eighth grades.

[Click here to see news release](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText17/HouseText17/H5541.pdf?List=c8baae31-3c10-431c-8dcd-9dbbe21ce3e9&ID=12712).

* **Sen. Nesselbush, Rep. Craven introduce workers’ co-op legislation**

Sen. Donna M. Nesselbush (D-Dist. 15, Pawtucket, North Providence) and Rep. Robert E. Craven (D-Dist. 32, North Kingstown) introduced legislation ([2017-S 0676](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText17/HouseText17/H5513.pdf), [2017-H 6001](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText17/HouseText17/H5315.pdf)) to create a statutory vehicle for the creation and functioning of workers' cooperatives. Workers' cooperatives are corporations that are owned and democratically governed by their members.

[Click here to see news release](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText17/HouseText17/H5250.pdf?List=c8baae31-3c10-431c-8dcd-9dbbe21ce3e9&ID=12710).

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