

July 17, 2020

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/>.



- **Assembly approves bill requiring notification of police in gun buyer’s hometown**
The General Assembly approved the Julie Lynn Cardinal Act ([2020-H 7103Baa](#), [2020-S 2154Aaa](#)), sponsored by Rep. Daniel P. McKiernan (D-Dist. 7, Providence) and Senate Minority Leader Dennis L. Algieri (R-Dist. 38, Charlestown, South Kingstown, Westerly), to require gun sellers to forward firearm applications to the police department of the city or town where the buyer resides. The bill now goes to the governor.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Assembly OKs Fair Chance Licensing legislation**
The General Assembly approved the Fair Chance Licensing Act ([2020-S 2824A](#), [2020-H 7947A](#)) sponsored by Sen. Harold M. Metts (D-Dist. 6, Providence) and Rep. Scott A. Slater (D-Dist. 10, Providence) to prevent Rhode Islanders from being denied an occupational license because of an unrelated criminal conviction. The bill now heads to the governor’s desk.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Voters will be asked to remove ‘Plantations’ from state name**
Rhode Island voters will be asked in November whether to remove “and Providence Plantations” from the state’s official name. The joint resolution ([2020-S 2902aa](#), [2020-H 8077](#)) putting the question on the ballot was sponsored by Sen. Harold M. Metts (D-Dist. 6, Providence) and Rep. Anastasia P. Williams (D-Dist. 9, Providence), who said it’s neither necessary nor any longer acceptable for the state to cling to an outdated reference that conjures an image of a time and place when slavery was widely accepted.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

More...

- **Rhode Island Parentage Act passes General Assembly**
Legislators approved the Rhode Island Parentage Act ([2020-H 7541Aaa](#), [2020-S 2136Baa](#)), sponsored by Rep. Carol Hagan McEntee (D-Dist. 33, South Kingstown, Narragansett) and Sen. Erin Lynch Prata (D-Dist. 31, Warwick, Cranston), which would repeal archaic and inequitable state law regarding parentage and replace it with a uniform act that provides procedures establishing parentage, genetic testing, surrogacy agreements and assisted reproduction. The bill heads to the governor.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Emergency mail ballot legislation passes the General Assembly**
In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the General Assembly OK'd legislation ([2020-H 8102A](#), [2020-S 2598A](#)) sponsored by Rep. Evan P. Shanley (D-Dist. 24, Warwick) and Sen. Erin Lynch Prata (D-Dist. 31, Warwick, Cranston) to allow emergency mail ballot applications to be processed at local boards of canvassers in person on electronic poll pads that will allow the voter to then cast their ballot themselves into a state-approved voting machine on site. That bill heads to the governor. The House also passed a separate measure ([2020-H 7200A](#)) sponsored by House Deputy Majority Whip Christopher R. Blazejewski (D-Dist. 2, Providence) to send mail ballot applications to every Rhode Island voter ahead of both the September primaries and the November election this year. That bill heads to the Senate.
[Click here to see news release on emergency ballots.](#)
[Click her to see news release on mail ballot applications.](#)

- **Lawmakers drop in-person signup requirement for online sports wagering**
The General Assembly approved a measure sponsored by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) and House Speaker Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) to make it easier to participate in mobile sports gaming in Rhode Island. The bill ([2020-S 2919](#), [2020-H 8097](#)), which now heads to the governor's desk, will allow people to register online to use Rhode Island's mobile app for sports wagering, rather than having to sign up in person at Twin River in Lincoln or Tiverton.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Assembly adds antitrust review for proposed hospital conversions**
Legislators approved legislation sponsored by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) and Rep. David A. Bennett (D-Dist. 20, Warwick, Cranston) to strengthen the Hospital Conversions Act by requiring a review of each proposed hospital conversion to ensure that it complies with antitrust laws. The bill ([2020-S 2572](#), [2020-H 7652](#)), which is backed by Attorney General Peter F. Neronha, will go to the governor.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Senate OKs bill on nursing home staffing, House to study issue**
The Senate approved legislation Nursing Home Staffing and Quality Care Act ([2020-S 2519](#)) sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence) to protect the health care of Rhode Islanders by setting standards for nursing home care. Rep. Scott A. Slater (D-Dist. 10, Providence) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2020-H 7624](#)). Senator Goodwin's bill now goes to the House, which approved a separate measure ([2020-H 8106](#)) sponsored by House

Majority Leader K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) creating a special legislative commission to study and provide recommendations on the status and requirements for Rhode Island's nursing homes.

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

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

- **Senate backs bill requiring full coverage of colorectal cancer screening**
The Senate approved a bill ([2020-S 2317A](#)) sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence) to require health insurers to cover preventive colorectal cancer screening, without cost-sharing, for all colorectal cancer examinations and laboratory tests in accordance with American Cancer Society guidelines. The bill now goes to the House, where Rep. Mia A. Ackerman (D-Dist. 45, Cumberland, Lincoln) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2020-H 7396](#)).
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Lawmakers celebrate Colombian Independence Day**
Sen. Sandra Cano (D-Dist. 8, Pawtucket) and Rep. Karen Alzate (D-Dist. 60, Pawtucket) introduced resolutions ([2020-S 2922](#), [2020-H 8109](#)) to celebrate the 210th anniversary of Colombian Independence Day on July 20.
[Click here to see news release.](#)