

March 6, 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.rilegislature.gov/pressrelease>



- **Assembly passes \$1 minimum wage increase**
With final votes in both chambers, the General Assembly approved legislation ([2020-S 2147A](#), [2020-H 7157A](#)) sponsored by Sen. Erin Lynch Prata (D-Dist. 31, Warwick Cranston) and Rep. David A. Bennett (D-Dist. 20, Warwick, Cranston) to raise the state's minimum wage by \$1 to \$11.50 an hour on Oct. 1. The legislation now goes to the governor's desk.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate approves Gallo bill to limit K-2 class size to 20 students**
The Senate passed legislation ([2020-S 2179](#)) introduced by Sen. Hanna M. Gallo (D-Dist. 27, Cranston, West Warwick) that would mandate that public school classroom size be limited to 20 students for kindergarten through the second grade. The measure now moves to the House of Representatives, where similar legislation ([2020-H 7050](#)) has been introduced by Rep. Christopher T. Millea (D-Dist. 16, Cranston).
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House OKs Vella-Wilkinson bill allowing pharmacists to prescribe birth control**
The House of Representatives passed legislation introduced by Rep. Camille F.J. Vella-Wilkinson (D-Dist. 21, Warwick) that would allow pharmacists to prescribe birth control. The bill ([2020-H 7073](#)) would authorize a pharmacist to prescribe and dispense hormonal contraceptive patches and self-administered oral hormonal contraceptives, provided that the pharmacist has completed a training program approved by the state Board of Pharmacy. The measure now moves to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2020-S 2388](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Mark

More...

McKenney (D-Dist. 30, Warwick).

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- **Senate approves Pearson bill requiring hospitals to adopt sepsis protocols**
The Senate approved legislation ([2020-S 2224](#)) introduced by Sen. Ryan W. Pearson (D-Dist. 19, Cumberland, Lincoln) that would require hospital medical staff to adopt, implement, periodically update and submit to the Director of Health, evidence-based protocols for the early recognition and treatment of patients with sepsis and septic shock. The measure now moves to the House of Representatives, where similar legislation ([2020-H 7470](#)) has been introduced by Rep. John W. Lyle Jr. (R-Dist. 46, Lincoln, Pawtucket).
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House passes Solomon bill to prohibit development on State House grounds**
The House of Representatives passed legislation introduced by Rep. Joseph J. Solomon Jr. (D-Dist. 22, Warwick) that would preserve the history and open space of the State House grounds. The legislation ([2020-H 7210](#)) would prohibit the development of any land contiguous to the State House unless approved by the General Assembly. The measure now moves to the Senate for consideration.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House passes McNamara's Right to Try legislation**
The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2020-H 7266](#)) introduced by Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) that would create the Rhode Island Terminally Ill Patients Right to Try Act of 2020, which would establish the conditions for the use of experimental treatments. Under the legislation, a clinical trial patient would have the right to continue the experimental treatment in a hospital setting, provided the patient or guardian signs a waiver of liability in favor of the hospital and its staff. The measure now moves to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2020-S 2242](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Jessica de la Cruz (R-Dist. 23, North Smithfield, Burrillville, Glocester).
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Sen. DiPalma's motion picture tax credit bill passes Senate**
Sen. Louis P. DiPalma's (D-Dist. 12, Middletown, Little Compton, Newport, Tiverton) legislation ([2020-S 2326A](#)) that amends the state's motion picture tax credit program passed the Senate. The legislation amends the current program by allowing productions to utilize tax credits, even if the majority of production is not done within the state, if the production spends a minimum of \$10 million within Rhode Island during a 12-month span. Rep. Marvin L. Abney (D-Dist. 73, Newport, Middletown) sponsored the companion legislation ([2020-H 7247A](#)), which has already passed the House of Representatives.
[Click here to see news release](#)
- **Shanley commission results in three bills addressing Internet privacy**
A special legislative commission chaired by Rep. Evan P. Shanley (D-Dist. 24, Warwick) to study privacy protection on the Internet has developed three bills which have been introduced by commission members. The first bill ([2020-H 7778](#)), introduced by Representative Shanley, would require online service providers and

commercial websites to disclose what categories of personally identifiable information they collect and to what third parties they sell the information. The second bill ([2020-H 7723](#)), introduced by House Majority Whip John G. Edwards (D-Dist. 70, Tiverton, Portsmouth) would regulate data brokers. The third bill ([2020-H 7724](#)), introduced by Rep. Jean Philippe Barros (D-Dist. 59, Pawtucket), would prohibit use of student information by cloud computing service providers. [Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Sen. Miller, Rep. Slater bill would amend Medical Marijuana Act**
Sen. Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) and Rep. Scott A. Slater (D-Dist. 10, Providence) have introduced legislation ([2020-S 2544](#), [2020-H 7621](#)) that would amend Rhode Island’s medical marijuana program. The legislation would create a hardship designation for patients on Social Security Disability Insurance and Medicaid. The bill also establishes a discount medicine program, eliminates plant tagging, allows unlimited compassion center licenses, reduces the compassion center license fee to \$5,000, and redefines “debilitating condition.”
- **Rep. Casimiro bill allows parole after 15 years for minors sentenced as adults**
Rep. Julie A. Casimiro (D-Dist. 31, North Kingstown, Narragansett) has introduced legislation ([2020-H 7592](#)) that would allow minors who were sentenced as adults to be eligible for parole after serving 15 years of their sentence. The bill would not apply to those serving life without parole or those committing heinous crimes, and would apply to those prisoners whose offenses were committed after Jan. 1, 1991. Identical legislation ([2020-S 2256](#)) has been introduced in the Senate by Sen. Harold M. Metts (D-Dist. 6, Providence). [Click here to see news release.](#)

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