

Feb. 21, 2014

Legislative Press Bureau at 222-2457

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/>



- **Marshall bill would create statewide enterprise zone**
Rep. Kenneth A. Marshall (D-Dist. 68, Bristol, Warren) has introduced legislation to designate all of Rhode Island as an enterprise zone to revitalize the state’s battered economy. If the bill ([2014-H 7209](#)) is approved, companies all over the state would qualify for state and any available federal tax credits for hiring new employees in enterprise zones.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Gallison bill would punish those who threaten schools**
Rep. Raymond E. Gallison Jr. (D-Dist. 69, Bristol, Portsmouth) has introduced legislation ([2014-H 7385](#)) to establish a new misdemeanor for the use of a computer, phone, smart phone, tablet, or any similar device to “make any false statements or threats concerning the endangerment of students at any school,” punishable with up to a year in prison and a fine of up to \$1,000. The bill would apply to schools at all levels, including colleges. Sen. Walter S. Felag Jr. (D-Dist. 10, Warren, Bristol, Tiverton) has introduced companion legislation ([2014-S 2378](#)).
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Comprehensive sex offender legislation introduced**
Rep. Peter G. Palumbo (D-Dist. 16, Cranston) has introduced legislation, in conjunction with the Office of the Attorney General, to replace existing sex offender laws with a more comprehensive statute, the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA), which implements provisions of the federal Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act. The bill proposes a new mechanism for “tiering” sex offenders and places control of the registry under the State Police. The bill ([2014-H](#)

More...

[7425](#)) is before the House Committee on Finance.

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▪ **Amore introduces firearm safety legislation**

Rep. Gregg Amore (D-Dist. 65, East Providence) introduced a bill to prevent those convicted of misdemeanor domestic assault from purchasing a firearm. The legislation ([2014-H 7310](#)) would apply to individuals convicted of all domestic violence-related misdemeanors, which includes simple assault, vandalism, disorderly conduct, trespassing, violation of protective orders, stalking, refusal to relinquish or to obstruct a telephone and cyberharassment. It would also subject violators to three to 15 years of imprisonment.

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

▪ **Bill calls for high-earner tax rate hike, restoration of revenue sharing**

Rep. Scott J. Guthrie (D-Dist. 28, Coventry) has introduced legislation calling for a restoration of general revenue sharing for cities and towns, funding the program with the added revenue that would result by hiking the tax rate on high-income earners. The bill ([2014-H 7245](#)) would raise the tax rate on income over \$250,000 from the current 5.99 percent to 7.99 percent, generating an estimated \$60 million in additional state revenue.

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

▪ **Cote submits bill to give veteran-owned companies a leg up for state contracts**

Sen. Marc A. Cote (D-Dist. 24, Woonsocket, North Smithfield) has introduced a bill ([2014-S 2257](#)) to give veteran-owned small businesses entities a preference in the state purchasing process, akin to the benefit awarded to women-owned and minority-owned businesses. The legislation would require that at least 3 percent of the total value of all state contracts available to businesses in each fiscal year be awarded to businesses owned by veterans. Similar legislation ([2014-H 7074](#)) has been introduced in the House by Rep. Deborah A. Fellela (D-Dist. 43, Johnston).

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

▪ **Legislation would reinstate auto excise tax phase-out**

Rep. Michael W. Chippendale (R-Dist. 40, Foster, Glocester, Coventry) has introduced a bill ([2014-H 7429](#)) to reinstate the automobile excise tax phase-out program, increasing exemptions by \$500 over the next six years and by \$1,000 over the following three years.

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

▪ **Bill introduced to eliminate income tax for retirees**

Rep. Joseph A. Trillo (R-Dist. 24, Warwick) has introduced legislation ([2014-H 7418](#)) to eliminate the personal income tax for all Rhode Island retirees, defined as anyone who has reached full retirement age as determined by the Social Security Administration.

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