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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/>



- **Legislators OK bill to seize pimps' profits**

The Assembly gave final passage to legislation ([2014-H 7620](#), [2014-S 2820](#)) introduced by Rep. Arthur J. Corvese (D-Dist. 55, North Providence) and Sen. Frank S. Lombardi (D-Dist. 26, Cranston) in cooperation with Attorney General Peter F. Kilmartin, to help law enforcement target pimps and others who profit from pandering or permitting prostitution. The bill changes current law, which allows seizure of prostitution profits only from prostitutes, to shift the forfeiture provision to pimps.

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- **House OKs bill changing teacher evaluation process**

The House of Representatives approved legislation ([2014-H 7096Aaa](#)) to establish a new process for teacher evaluations in the state's schools. Sponsored by Rep. William W. O'Brien (D-Dist. 54, North Providence), the bill provides that teachers evaluated as "highly effective" would only need to be re-assessed once every four years, rather than annually. Teachers evaluated as "effective" would face a re-evaluation once every three years. A companion Senate bill ([2014-S 2738](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence).

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- **House OKs national background checks for long-term health care employees**

The House passed legislation ([2014-H 7413](#)), sponsored by Rep. Eileen S. Naughton (D-District 21, Warwick) on behalf of Attorney General Peter F. Kilmartin, requiring national criminal records check for all individuals applying to be a routine contact employee in a long-term care facility or provider, as required under the Affordable

More...

Care Act. Senator Frank Lombardi (D-District 26, Cranston) sponsors a companion bill ([2014-S 2652](#)) in the Senate.

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▪ **House passes ‘Access to Medical Technology Innovation Act’**

The House approved legislation ([2014-H 7368A](#)) designed to help expedite the Department of Health certificate of need process and to help open doors for domestic medical tourism companies to locate in Rhode Island. Introduced by Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston), the bill provides for an expeditious review process for certificate of need applications, an exemption from the certificate requirements for the medical tourism industry, and a statewide healthcare utilization and capacity study. A companion Senate bill ([2014-S 2526](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Erin P. Lynch (D-Dist. 31, Warwick, Cranston).

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▪ **Senate passes ‘Erin’s Law’ to teach young students about exploitation, abuse**

The Senate has passed legislation ([2014-S 2058](#)) to establish a comprehensive school program to provide an age-appropriate course of instruction in the prevention of child abduction, child sexual exploitation and child sexual abuse. Sponsored by Sen. James E. Doyle II (D-Dist. 8, Pawtucket), “Erin’s Law” has been enacted in 12 states and is named for Erin Merryn of Illinois, who was sexually abused as a young child. A companion House bill ([2014-H 7292](#)) was introduced by Rep. Raymond H. Johnston Jr. (D-Dist. 61, Pawtucket).

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▪ **Senate OKs bill to amend fire code provisions on tents**

The Senate passed legislation ([2014-S 2228A](#)) to amend the state fire code regarding tents, tripling the square-footage a tent is required to cover before a license is necessary for its use and occupancy, exempting tents on the properties of one- and two-family residential dwellings from licensing requirements, and requiring the state fire marshal to provide training to all assistant deputy fire marshals to ensure that all communities are enforcing the law equally. The bill was sponsored by Sen. William A. Walaska (D-Dist. 30, Warwick).

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▪ **Senate Judiciary Committee sends ethics bill to floor**

The Senate Judiciary Committee passed and sent to the full Senate for action legislation ([2014-S 2824Aaa](#)) to put a constitutional amendment question before voters in November, setting the makeup and powers of the Ethics Commission and specifically its authority over members of the General Assembly. The legislation was introduced by Sen. James C. Sheehan (D-Dist. 36, Narragansett, North Kingstown).

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▪ **O’Neill hit-and-run legislation travels to House for consideration**

Sen. Edward J. O’Neill’s (I-Dist. 17, Lincoln, North Providence) legislation ([2014-S 2037aa](#)) instilling harsher penalties for hit-and-run drivers has garnered passage in the Senate and now awaits consideration from the House of Representatives. Under the language of this bill, individuals found guilty of leaving the scene of an accident

could face longer jail sentences, huge fines and, in one case, permanent loss of their licenses. Rep. John J. Lombardi (D-Dist. 8, Providence) sponsors a similar bill ([2014-H 7020](#)) in the House.

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▪ **House OKs bill calling for POW/MIA Chair of Honor in State House**

The House passed legislation ([2014-H 8182](#)) to establish and display in the State House a POW/MIA Chair of Honor, commemorating the men and women of the armed forces taken as prisoners of war or listed as missing in action. The bill was introduced by Rep. Jan P. Malik (D-Dist. 67, Warren, Barrington) in cooperation with the office of Lt. Gov. Elizabeth H. Roberts. Sen. Walter S. Felag Jr. (D-Dist. 10, Bristol, Tiverton, Warren) has introduced the bill in the Senate ([2014-S 3015](#)).

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▪ **Tanzi bill would close corporate tax loophole**

Rep. Teresa Tanzi (D-Dist. 34, South Kingstown, Narragansett) is sponsoring legislation ([2014-H 7739](#)) to stop multi-state or multi-national corporations from dodging state taxes by hiding their Rhode Island profit in shell corporations or other out-of-state entities that are not subject to Rhode Island taxes. The bill would enact “combined reporting,” which would require corporations to combine all their subsidiaries as a single entity and then pay taxes to Rhode Island based on the percentage generated by its operations in this state. It is designed to level the playing field between large corporations and smaller homegrown businesses. Sen. Daniel Da Ponte (D-Dist. 14, East Providence) has introduced similar legislation ([2014-S 2988A](#)) in the Senate.

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