

June 21, 2016

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>



- **General Assembly approves \$8.94 billion budget bill**
The General Assembly approved an \$8.94 billion 2017 state budget bill ([2016-H 7454A](#)) that includes no broad-based tax increases, provides tax relief to retirees, enhances the state's economic development tools, fully funds education, significantly scales back a proposal to tax medical marijuana and rolls back parking fees at state beaches to 2011 levels. The bill will now be sent to the governor. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **State legislature OKs bills aimed at curbing opioid abuse**
The General Assembly gave its approval to a package of legislation aimed at addressing the opioid overdose crisis. The bills will now be forwarded to the governor. Legislators worked in conjunction with the governor's Overdose Prevention and Intervention Task Force to craft the bills ([2016-S 2356Aaa](#), [2016-H 7616A](#), [2016-S 2460Aaa](#), [2016-H 7710A](#), [2016-S 2823Aaa](#), [2016-H 8224A](#), [2016-S 2874](#), [2016-H 7849](#), [2016-S 2946A](#), [2016-H 8326](#), [2016-S 2897](#), [2016-H 7847](#), [2016-S 2579B](#), [2016-H 8056A](#)), which are meant to take a comprehensive approach that focuses on prevention as well as making treatment more available and accessible. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **General Assembly OKs renewable energy legislation**
The General Assembly passed legislation sponsored by Rep. Deborah Ruggiero (D-Dist. 74, Jamestown, Middletown) and Sen. William J. Conley Jr. (D-Dist. 18, East Providence, Pawtucket) to expand several renewable energy initiatives. The legislation ([2016-H 8354A](#), [2016-S 2450B](#)) extends the Renewable Energy Fund for five years, makes more projects eligible for long-term, fixed rate pricing, exempts

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residential renewable energy systems and those used in manufacturing from taxation and establishes a statewide tax rate for commercial renewable energy systems.

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

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

- **Legislature OKs bill regulating transportation network companies, such as Uber**
The General Assembly has passed legislation ([2016-H 8044A](#), [2016-S 2864Aaa](#)) introduced by House Majority Whip John G. Edwards (D-Dist. 70, Tiverton, Portsmouth) and Senate Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence) that would regulate transportation network companies such as Uber and Lyft by creating regulatory provisions for operators and drivers to be administered by the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers. It also would require them to obtain permits, and certain background checks, and would set minimum insurance requirements. The measure now heads to the governor.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **General Assembly passes bill requiring at least 20 minutes of recess in school**
The General Assembly has passed legislation ([2016-H 7644Aaa](#), [2016-S 2669Aaa](#)) introduced by Rep. Kathleen A. Fogarty (D-Dist. 35, South Kingstown) and Sen. Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) that would require elementary schools to have at least 20 minutes of free play recess during the school day and discourages schools from taking away recess for academic or punitive reasons. The law would apply to pupils in kindergarten through sixth grade. The measure now heads to the governor's office.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Assembly OKs bill granting amnesty to those reporting sexual abuse on campus**
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2016-H 7865](#), [2016-S 3092](#)) introduced by Rep. Mia Ackerman (D-Dist. 45, Cumberland, Lincoln) and Sen. Hanna M. Gallo (D-Dist. 27, Cranston, West Warwick) that requires institutions of higher learning to adopt a policy which grants amnesty for violations of drug/alcohol policies for those who report incidents of violence, including domestic violence, dating violence, stalking and sexual assault. The measure now heads to the governor.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **General Assembly passes dyslexia screening bills**
Rep. William W. O'Brien (D-Dist. 54, North Providence) and Sen. Frank S. Lombardi's (D-Dist. 26, Cranston) legislation ([2016-H 7052](#), [2016-S 2337](#)) that adds dyslexia-targeted screening and assistance as a required aspect of the literacy program for students at the elementary grade level was passed by the General Assembly. The legislation now heads to Governor Raimondo's desk for action.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Legislature OKs bill to destroy records of those 'Fitting the Description'**
The General Assembly has passed legislation supporting the 'Fitting the Description' movement and requiring law enforcement to automatically destroy all arrest records for those who are victims of mistaken or wrongful arrests. Sponsored by Rep. Carlos E. Tobon (D-Dist. 58, Pawtucket) and Sen. Juan M. Pichardo (D-Dist. 2, Providence), the legislation ([2016-H 7094](#), [2016-S 2421](#)) now heads to Governor Raimondo's desk

for action. The legislation would require the sealing and destruction of all arrest records and indices of arrest for those persons who are wrongfully arrested or detained by any law enforcement agency.

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- **Assembly OKs bill to enable municipalities to license massage parlors**
The General Assembly has passed legislation ([2016-H 7007A](#), [2016-S 2699](#)) that enables and explicitly authorizes municipalities to regulate unlicensed massage parlors and services within its borders in response to illegal sex trafficking operations disguised as massage parlors or bodyworks establishments. The legislation, sponsored by Rep. Carlos E. Tobon (D-Dist. 58, Pawtucket) and Sen. James E. Doyle II (D-Dist. 8, Pawtucket), now heads to Governor Raimondo's desk for action.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Assembly approves bill to keep guns out of hands of felony domestic abusers**
The General Assembly has unanimously approved legislation sponsored by Sen. Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) and Rep. Gregg Amore (D-Dist. 65, East Providence) to take firearms out of the hands of perpetrators of domestic violence. The legislation ([2016-S 2492A](#), [2016-H 7283A](#)), which will now go to the governor, would require the surrender of firearms within 24 hours by anyone who is either convicted of a felony charge of domestic violence, or pleads nolo contendere.
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