

June 30, 2017

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>



- **Bill that protects workers' pay from unauthorized deductions passes Assembly**
Rep. Robert E. Craven (D-Dist. 32, North Kingstown) and Sen. Frank S. Lombardi's (D-Dist. 26, Cranston) legislation ([2017-H 5932Aaa](#), [2017-S 0350B](#)) that prohibits employers from making deductions from an employee's wages without written authorization from the worker passed the General Assembly. The legislation states that employers cannot deduct wages from a worker for reasons such as spoilage or breakage of equipment or product, any amount of shortages or losses, and fines or penalties for tardiness, misconduct, or quitting without notice.
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- **Assembly approves comprehensive human trafficking bill**
The General Assembly has passed legislation sponsored by Sen. Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) and Rep. Shelby Maldonado (D-Dist. 56, Central Falls) to help prevent human trafficking and apprehend its perpetrators in Rhode Island and across the country. The Uniform Act on Prevention of and Remedies for Human Trafficking ([2017-S 0073Aaa](#), [2017-H 5300A](#)) enacts an approach of strong penalties, protecting and assisting victims and improved public awareness and planning. The bill now goes to the governor.
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- **General Assembly OKs bill to support children who witness violent crime**
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2017-H 5452](#), [2017-S 0566](#)) introduced by House Majority Leader K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) and Sen. Hanna M. Gallo (D-Dist. 27, Cranston, West Warwick) that would expand Rhode Island's Crime Victim Compensation Program to include support for minors who witness

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homicides or domestic violence. The measure now moves to the governor's office.
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- **Legislature votes for driver's education course for parents of teen drivers**
The General Assembly approved legislation ([2017-H 5457Aaa](#), [2017-S 0555Aaa](#)) sponsored by House Majority Leader K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) and Sen. Hanna M. Gallo (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) to establish a free educational course for parents of students in driver's education classes. The bill now heads to the governor.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Assembly OKs bill to expedite merger of Memorial Hospital, Prime Healthcare**
Rep. Raymond H. Johnston, Jr. (D-Dist. 61, Pawtucket) and Sen. Elizabeth A. Crowley's (D-Dist. 16, Central Falls, Pawtucket) legislation ([2017-H 6284A](#), [2017-S 0937Aaa](#)) that would streamline the procedure for the approval of mergers of nonprofit hospitals in response to the proposed merger of Memorial Hospital in Pawtucket with Prime Healthcare Foundation passed the General Assembly.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Assembly OKs bill giving veteran-owned companies a leg up for state contracts**
The General Assembly approved legislation ([2017-S 0085A](#), [2017-H 5280A](#)) sponsored by Sen. Marc A. Cote (D-Dist. 24, Woonsocket, North Smithfield) and Rep. Michael A. Morin (D-Dist. 49, Woonsocket) to give veteran-owned small businesses a preference in state purchasing and set a goal that at least 3 percent of the total value of state contracts be awarded to businesses owned by veterans. The bill now goes to the governor.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Lawmakers OK bill enabling at-home learning for lost school days**
School districts will have the opportunity to make up lost school days through the use of at-home learning plans under a bill sponsored by Sen. Roger A. Picard (D-Dist. 20, Woonsocket, Cumberland) and Rep. Robert D. Phillips (D-Dist. 51, Woonsocket, Cumberland) and approved by the General Assembly. The bill would enable districts to create plans, approved by the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, to make up a snow day or other lost day through lessons that students could complete on their own at home. The bill now goes to the governor.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Assembly votes to study line-item veto, runoff elections for governor**
The General Assembly gave its approval to a joint resolution ([2017-H 5340A](#), [2017-S 0961](#)) sponsored by Rep. Kenneth A. Marshall (D-Dist. 68, Bristol, Warren) and Sen. Frank S. Lombardi (D-Dist. 26, Cranston) to form a joint legislative commission to study the effects of giving the governor line-item veto power and the ramifications of runoff elections for the governor in situations when no candidate receives a majority.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Bill enhancing transparency of I-195 Commission gets nod**
The General Assembly approved legislation ([2017-S 0850A](#), [2017-H 6300](#)) sponsored by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) and House Majority Leader K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) to increase

transparency of I-195 Commission meetings by requiring more meetings and discussions be held in public and ethics training for members. The bill will now go to the governor.

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▪ **General Assembly passes bill that extends vehicle expiration dates**

Sen. Louis P. DiPalma (D-Dist. 12, Middletown, Little Compton, Newport, Tiverton) and Rep. Brian Patrick Kennedy's (D-Dist. 38, Hopkinton, Westerly) legislation ([2017-S 0950](#), [2017-H 6251](#)) that would grant the RI Division of Motor Vehicles administrator the ability to extend expiration dates under certain circumstances that prevent the proper performance of their duties passed the General Assembly. The measure now moves to the governor's office.

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-30-

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