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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>



- **Speaker Mattiello bill would allow partial-fill option on opioid prescriptions**
Addressing the opioid epidemic, Speaker of the House Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) has introduced legislation that would give patients the option of only partially filling their prescription for painkillers. The bill ([2018-H 7416](#)) would allow a pharmacist to dispense a partial fill of a Schedule II controlled substance at the request of either the patient or the prescriber.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. McNamara wants attendance review teams to combat school absenteeism**
Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) has introduced legislation that would create attendance review teams in districts and schools where an absenteeism problem has been identified. The bill ([2018-H 7040](#)) would direct the state Department of Education to establish a chronic absenteeism prevention and intervention plan by Jan. 1, 2019.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Solomon bill would allow for early voting in Rhode Island**
Rep. Joseph J. Solomon Jr. (D-Dist. 22, Warwick) has introduced legislation that would help voters avoid long waits at polling places on Election Day. The bill ([2018-H 7501](#)) would create a process for in-person early voting to be conducted at locations determined by local boards of canvassers and approved by the state Board of Elections.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

More...

- **Legislators commit to fight for 2018 ‘Fair Shot Agenda’**
Dozens of representatives committed at a State House event to advocate for the 2018 “Fair Shot Agenda,” a set of legislative solutions to address the growing gap between the wealthy and the middle class. The agenda includes a budget that protects people, investments in school facilities to make them safe and appropriate, pay equity, a \$15 minimum wage and affordable long-term care and prescription drugs for seniors.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **‘Talking bus’ bill heard in committee**
The House Corporations Committee heard legislation ([2018-H 7087](#)) sponsored by Rep. Lauren H. Carson (D-Dist. 75, Newport) to prohibit the operation of the safe turn alert system on “talking” RIPTA buses in residential neighborhoods. Almost as soon as the system went into use last year, Representative Carson says she began hearing from constituents about all the noise they make while operating, which can be as early as 6 a.m.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Sen. Metts bill bans housing discrimination based on lawful source of income**
Sen. Harold M. Metts (D-Dist. 6, Providence) has introduced legislation ([2018-S 2301](#)) prohibiting landlords from discriminating against tenants or potential tenants on the basis of their lawful source of income. The bill is meant, in large part, to stop landlords from discriminating against those who receive Section 8 housing funds or other types of assistance. Rep. Anastasia P. Williams (D-Dist. 9, Providence) has introduced the legislation ([2018-H 7528](#)) in the House.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Rep. Shekarchi bill would increase Board of Elections transparency**
House Majority Leader K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) has introduced legislation ([2018-H 7438](#)) to increase the transparency of the state Board of Elections by making it subject to the rulemaking provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act, which would require it to adhere to standards involving public notice and allowing public comment on any changes to its regulations. Sen. Stephen R. Archambault (D-Dist. 22, Smithfield, North Providence, Johnston) has introduced the bill ([2018-S 2088](#)) in the Senate.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Rep. Marshall bill extends good Samaritan law to underage drinking**
Rep. Kenneth A. Marshall (D-Dist. 68, Bristol, Warren) has introduced legislation ([2018-H 7305](#)) that extends protections under the Good Samaritan Overdose Protection Act to underage persons involved in reporting alcohol-related emergencies. Sen. Walter S. Felag Jr. (D-Dist. 10, Warren, Bristol, Tiverton) is sponsoring the legislation ([2018-S 2024](#)) in the Senate.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Rep. Filippi calls for greater protection for victims of data breaches**
House Minority Whip Blake A. Filippi (R-Dist. 36, New Shoreham, Charlestown, South Kingstown, Westerly) has introduced legislation ([2018-H 7387](#)) requiring companies to notify Rhode Islanders of any security breaches related to their personal information. The bill would require that any company that experiences a security

breach notify their customers immediately of the situation without unreasonable delay. Any company failing to do so would be in violation of Rhode Island's unfair trade practices statute and may face fines up to \$150,000 per data breach.

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

- **House, Senate finance committees begin hearings on proposed FY 2019 budget**

The House and Senate committees on finance began hearings on the proposed FY 2019 budget ([2018-H 7200](#)). Both committees heard staff presentations on the proposed budget, as well as hearings devoted to individual budget articles within the proposal. The committees will continue to hear testimony on the proposed budget for the next few months.

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