

June 15, 2018

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>



- **House of Representatives poised to consider state budget bill**

The House of Representative was slated to vote late Friday on the state's \$9.3 billion budget ([2018-H 7200Aaa](#)) for the fiscal year that begins July 1. The House's amended budget restores proposed cuts to services for the state's most vulnerable populations and continues the phase-out of the car tax without raising broad-based taxes. It also includes a bond question for November's ballot asking voters to approve \$250 million in construction to replace the state's crumbling public schools, although the bill adds a requirement that communities commit to funding regular maintenance of new schools.

- **General Assembly OKs legislation to protect DACA Dreamers**

The General Assembly passed legislation introduced by Rep. Shelby Maldonado (D-Dist. 56, Central Falls) and Senate Majority Leader Michael J. McCaffrey (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) that would continue to protect undocumented immigrants who came to the United States as minors. The legislation ([2018-H 7982B](#), [2018-S 2678A](#)) would continue the status quo relating to operator and chauffeur's licenses to approved recipients under the DACA program. It would also provide that the issuance of a Rhode Island operator's license would not confer the right to vote in the state of Rhode Island. The measure now heads to the governor.

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- **General Assembly passes bill banning fees for credit freezes**

The General Assembly approved legislation sponsored by Sen. Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) and Rep. Mia A. Ackerman (D-Dist. 45, Cumberland, Lincoln) to prohibit consumer reporting agencies from charging

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consumers for a credit freeze. The legislation ([2018-S 2562](#), [2018-H 7604](#)), which will now be sent to the governor, eliminates an existing law that allows reporting agencies to charge up to \$10 to consumers who ask for a credit freeze, which prohibits a reporting agency from giving their personal credit information to any third-party creditor.

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▪ **House approves Kristen's Law**

The House approved Kristen's Law, a bill ([2018-H 7715Aaa](#)) sponsored by House Speaker Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) to strengthen penalties for dealers who sell fatal drug doses, creating a new charge that can carry up to life in prison. The bill now goes to the Senate, which has passed companion legislation ([2018-S 2279A](#)) sponsored by Sen. Hanna M. Gallo (D-Dist. 27, Cranston, West Warwick).

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▪ **Senate passes Goodwin bill raising penalties for DUI with kids in the vehicle**

Those driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs with a child in the vehicle will face a felony charge with stiffer penalties under legislation sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence) and passed by the Senate. The bill ([2018-S 2867](#)) will now head to the House, where Rep. Robert A. Nardolillo III (R-Dist. 28, Coventry) is sponsoring similar legislation ([2018-H 7223](#)).

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▪ **Senate OKs bill to establish customer service standards for electric, gas utilities**

The Senate passed legislation ([2018-S 2332](#)) sponsored by Sen. Roger A. Picard (D-Dist. 20, Woonsocket, Cumberland) on behalf of Lt. Gov. Daniel McKee to require gas and electric utilities serving 100,000 or more customers to provide prompt and adequate service to their ratepayers relating to new service and service upgrades, and to provide written estimates and itemized bills for service. The bill now goes to the House, where Rep. Deborah Ruggiero (D-Dist. 74, Jamestown, Middletown) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2018-H 7132](#)).

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▪ **Euer bill simplifying food truck registration passes Senate**

The Senate approved legislation sponsored by Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) to create the State Mobile Food Establishment Registration Act ([2018-S 2502A](#)), to lighten the regulatory burden on operators of food, ice cream and lemonade trucks or carts. The bill now goes to the House, where Rep. Brian Patrick Kennedy (D-Dist. 38, Hopkinton, Westerly) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2018-H 7790](#)).

▪ **Houses passes Serpa bill to ban sale of dogs, cats not acquired from shelter**

The House of Representatives gave its approval to legislation ([2018-H 7477](#)) introduced by Rep. Patricia A. Serpa (D-Dist. 27, West Warwick, Coventry, Warwick) that would ban the sale of dogs and cats at pet shops, except those that have come from an animal shelter, dog pound or animal rescue. The measure now moves to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2018-S 2780](#)) has been introduced by

Sen. Stephen R. Archambault (D-Dist. 22, Smithfield, North Providence, Johnston).  
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- **House OKs Williams' bill to exempt natural hair braiders from licensing**  
Rep. Anastasia P. Williams' (D-Dist. 9, Providence) legislation ([2018-H 7565](#)) that would exempt natural hair braiders from the state's requirement for hairdressers and cosmeticians to be licensed with the state passed the House of Representatives. The measure now moves to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2018-S 2323](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown).  
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- **Senate Rules Committee hears resolution on Senate expulsion policy**  
The Senate Committee on Rules, Government Ethics and Oversight passed a resolution ([2018-S 2967](#)) introduced by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) that would alter the rules of the Senate regarding the expulsion of a member, elaborating on the process involved and guaranteeing due process.

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