

May 4, 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>



- **Senate approves Goodwin’s long-term care bills**

The Senate approved legislation ([2018-S 2553aa](#)) sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence) to authorize the state to seek Medicaid waivers or state-plan amendments to support services like education and respite care to family caregivers. It also passed another bill ([2018-S 2552](#)) she sponsored to establish a public scorecard system to show how long-term care reform is meeting its goals of rebalancing the way services are delivered and how funding is spent on various service types. Both bills will now be forwarded to the House, where Rep. Julie A. Casimiro (D-Dist. 31, North Kingstown, Exeter) is sponsoring legislation ([2018-H 7491](#)) similar to the first bill and Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Cranston, Warwick) is sponsoring a companion bill ([2018-H 7481](#)) for the second. [Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Senate OKs Lombardi bill that would criminalize forced isolation of elders**

The Senate passed the Peter Falk Criminal Isolation of Elders Act ([2018-S 2421Aaa](#)) introduced by Sen. Frank S. Lombardi (D-Dist. 26, Cranston) that would make it a crime to keep an elder or dependent adult in forced isolation. The measure now heads to the House of Representatives for consideration. [Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Senate passes Sosnowski bill to ban junk food advertising in schools**

The Senate passed legislation ([2018-S 2350A](#)) sponsored by Sen. V. Susan Sosnowski (D-Dist. 37, New Shoreham, South Kingstown) that would forbid the advertising of unhealthy food and beverage products in schools, particularly those that may not be sold on the school campus during the school day, since they do not

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meet the minimum nutrition standards. The bill now heads to the House of Representatives, where similar legislation ([2018-H 7419](#)) has been introduced by Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston).

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

▪ **Senate OKs Satchell bills to improve services for kids**

The Senate passed two bills sponsored by Sen. Adam J. Satchell (D-Dist. 9, West Warwick) to help provide schoolchildren with much-needed services. The first bill ([2018-S 2052](#)) would collect information on the number of social workers in Rhode Island schools and the services they provide. The second ([2018-S 2347A](#)) creates a permanent joint commission on out-of-school time learning to identify worthwhile programs and to look for ways to offer similar programs to students in other communities. Rep. Katherine S. Kazarian (D-Dist. 63, East Providence) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2018-H 7685](#)) to the first bill and Rep. Julie Casimiro (D-Dist. 31, North Kingstown, Exeter) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2018-H 7413](#)) to the other.

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

▪ **Speaker Mattiello introduces bill to update state explosives laws to include IEDs**

House Speaker Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) introduced legislation to strengthen Rhode Island's outdated law on bombs and other explosive devices. The legislation ([2018-H 8156](#)), cosponsored by Anthony Giarrusso (R-Dist. 30, East Greenwich, West Greenwich), addresses loopholes that have hindered the filing of charges following incidents involving explosive devices, such as one last month when a pressure cooker bomb was discovered off Hopkins Hill Road in West Greenwich.

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

▪ **Rep. Costantino bill would limit Uber fees to \$3 at T.F. Green Airport**

Rep. Gregory J. Costantino (D-Dist. 44, Lincoln, Smithfield, Johnston) introduced legislation that would limit the fees T.F. Green Airport charges Uber drivers to \$3. The ride-sharing service announced last week that it would no longer pick up passengers at the airport after officials raised the fees it charges Uber drivers from \$3 to \$6.

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

▪ **Rep. McEntee, Sen. Nesselbush look to abolish abuse statute of limitations**

Rep. Carol Hagan McEntee (D-Dist. 33, South Kingstown, Narragansett) and Sen. Donna M. Nesselbush (D-Dist. 15, Pawtucket, North Providence) were joined by survivors of sexual abuse and support advocates at a press conference to highlight their legislation ([2018-H 7753](#), [2018-S 2600](#)) that would eliminate the civil statute of limitations for injuries suffered as a result of sexual abuse. The participants of the press conference testified in support of the legislation later in the evening before the Senate Committee on Judiciary.

▪ **Supporters testify for Sen. Coyne bill to raise tobacco purchase age to 21**

The Senate Judiciary Committee heard testimony for legislation sponsored by Sen. Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) to raise the minimum age to purchase tobacco products in Rhode Island from 18 to 21. The bill ([2018-S 2464](#)) would apply to all tobacco products including electronic cigarettes and

would take effect Jan. 1. Rep. Teresa A. Tanzi (D-Dist. 34, South Kingstown, Narragansett) is sponsoring similar legislation ([2018-H 7647](#)) in the House. [Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Sen. Coyne bill would let seniors earn property tax credit by volunteering**
Sen. Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) is proposing legislation ([2018-S 2668](#)) to authorize cities and towns to establish programs to offer tax credits to property owners age 60 and over in exchange for volunteering for the municipality. While each city and town adopting the program could set its own parameters, the legislation would allow them to let seniors earn up to \$1,500 off their property taxes. [Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Sen. Cote sponsors consumer protection bills**
Sen. Marc Cote (D-Dist. 24, Woonsocket, North Smithfield) has introduced two bills aimed at improving consumer protection. The first ([2018-S 2280](#)), which he sponsored on behalf of Attorney General Peter F. Kilmartin, would require national Bureau of Criminal Identification background checks for all taxi drivers and drivers working for transportation network companies (such as Uber and Lyft). The other ([2018-S 2328](#)) would prohibit businesses from making the sale of their product conditional on the purchase of insurance, and prohibit companies from using nonpublic information to solicit sales of insurance products, or providing it to someone else to do so. Rep. Arthur Corvese (D-Dist. 55, North Providence) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2018-H 7606](#)) to the first bill, and Rep. Kenneth A. Marshall is sponsoring a companion bill ([2018-H 7563](#)) to the second.

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