

May 18, 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 OKs McKiernan ethics bill to post financial statements online**  
The House of Representatives approved legislation ([2018-H 8042](#)) introduced by Rep. Daniel P. McKiernan (D-Dist. 7, Providence) that would require that the Rhode Island Ethics Commission make all financial statements required of certain public officials available online for public inspection. The measure now heads to the Senate for consideration.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House passes McNamara's Neil Fachon Right to Try Act of 2018**  
The House of Representatives passed the Neil Fachon Rhode Island Terminally Ill Patients Right to Try Act of 2018 ([2018-H 7294](#)) submitted by Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston). The bill would allow terminally ill patients to obtain experimental drugs that have not yet been federally approved but which may be in the final stages of FDA testing. The measure now moves to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2018-S 2401](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Erin Lynch Prata (D-Dist. 31, Warwick, Cranston).  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate OKs Seveney bill to overhaul drug awareness program, funding**  
The Rhode Island Senate passed legislation ([2018-S 2025Aaa](#)) introduced by Sen. James A. Seveney (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol, Tiverton) that would change the way drug awareness programs are approved and funded. The bill now moves to the House of Representatives, where similar legislation ([2018-H 7221](#)) has been introduced by House Majority Whip John G. Edwards (D-Dist. 70, Tiverton,

More...

Portsmouth).

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

▪ **House passes Ackerman bill to offer flu vaccine to senior hospital inpatients**

The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2018-H 7569](#)) introduced by Rep. Mia Ackerman (D-Dist. 45, Cumberland, Lincoln) that would require hospitals to offer influenza vaccinations to their inpatients who are 65 and over unless the person has a condition that would not allow such vaccination or if the vaccine is in short supply. The measure now moves to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2018-S 2226](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Erin Lynch Prata (D-Dist. 31, Warwick, Cranston).

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

▪ **House OKs McNamara bill to ban advertising of unhealthy foods in schools**

The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2018-H 7419A](#)) submitted by Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) that would prohibit 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 meet the minimum nutrition standards. The measure now moves to the Senate, which has passed similar legislation ([2018-S 2350A](#)) introduced by Sen. V. Susan Sosnowski (D-Dist. 37, South Kingstown, New Shoreham).

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

▪ **House approves Rep. Keable bill overhauling Energy Facility Siting Board**

The House approved legislation ([2018-H 8120 A](#)) sponsored by Rep. Cale P. Keable (D-Dist. 47, Burrillville, Gloucester) to overhaul the Energy Facilities Siting Board and to provide a more comprehensive process for reviewing power plant proposals. The bill now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Paul W. Fogarty (D-Dist. 23, Gloucester, Burrillville, North Smithfield) said he will introduce companion legislation.

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

▪ **Senate passes bill creating elder abuse and financial exploitation task force**

The Senate approved legislation ([2018-S 2868](#)) sponsored by Sen. Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) to create a special legislative task force to study abuse and financial exploitation of elderly Rhode Islanders. The bill now goes to the House, where Rep. Patricia A. Serpa (D-Dist. 27, West Warwick, Coventry, Warwick) has introduced companion legislation ([2018-H 8031](#)).

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

▪ **Sen. Miller introduces updated marijuana regulation bill**

Sen. Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) introduced legislation ([2018-S 2895](#)) that draws upon the experiences of states where marijuana has been legalized to create a system to tax and regulate marijuana in Rhode Island. The bill would create a tax structure mirroring that of Massachusetts, where recreational marijuana sales will become legal in July.

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

▪ **Senate OKs bill to ban housing discrimination based on lawful source of income**

The Senate approved legislation ([2018-S 2301](#)) sponsored by Sen. Harold M. Metts

(D-Dist. 6, Providence) to prohibit landlords from discriminating against tenants or potential tenants on the basis of their lawful sources of income. The bill is intended to prevent discrimination against those who receive Section 8 housing funds or other types of assistance. It now heads to the House, where Rep. Anastasia P. Williams (D-Dist. 9, Providence) has introduced companion legislation ([2018-H 7528](#)).

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

- **Speaker Mattiello, President Ruggerio applaud decision on sports betting**  
Speaker of the House Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) and Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) applauded the United States Supreme Court's decision this week to allow states to offer legalized sports betting. The governor has included a budget article accounting for legalized sports betting in her FY 2019 budget proposal. The Senate Finance Committee heard testimony on the proposed budget item as well as a sports betting bill introduced by President Ruggerio.  
[Click here for Speaker Mattiello's release.](#)  
[Click here for President Ruggerio's release.](#)

**-30-**

*For an electronic version of this and all press releases published by the Legislative Press and Public Information Bureau, please visit our website at [www.rilegislature.gov/pressrelease](http://www.rilegislature.gov/pressrelease).*