

March 30, 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>



- **Sen. Lynch Prata’s Joint Committee of the Repealer bill passes Senate**
The Rhode Island Senate has approved legislation ([2018-S 2302](#)) sponsored by Sen. Erin Lynch Prata (D-Dist. 31, Warwick, Cranston) to establish a new General Assembly Joint Committee of the Repealer, to be tasked with the job of combing through Rhode Island’s laws and proposing which outdated statutes should be repealed. House Majority Whip John G. Edwards (D-Dist. 70, Tiverton, Portsmouth) has sponsored the companion legislation ([2018-H 7220](#)) in the House of Representatives.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Sen. Sheehan bill would nullify nondisclosure agreements for sexual harassment**
The Senate Judiciary Committee heard testimony on legislation introduced by Sen. James C. Sheehan (D-Dist. 36, Narragansett, North Kingstown) that would make non-disclosure agreements nonbinding in cases involving sexual harassment. The bill ([2018-S 2687A](#)) would void any provision of a settlement that prohibits disclosure of the factual information related to a claim of sexual harassment, retaliation for reporting sexual harassment, and stalking as against public policy.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Caregivers, parents, advocates urge expansion of caregiver leave**
A coalition of advocates, care providers and parents announced their support of legislation ([2018-S 2470](#), [2018-H 7544](#)) sponsored by Sen. Gayle L. Goldin (D-Dist. 3, Providence) and Rep. Christopher R. Blazewski (D-Dist. 2, Providence) expanding access to the state’s paid family leave program, the Temporary Caregiver Insurance program. The bill would expand the number of weeks of leave permitted

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from four to eight, increase pay for those making less than twice the minimum wage, and add grandchildren and siblings to the family members for whose care a person can claim TCI.

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

- **Group of male representatives speak out for reproductive freedom and choice**
In response to the Trump Administration's persistent attack on women's reproductive freedom, a group of male Rhode Island state representatives led by Rep. Jason Knight (D-Dist. 67, Barrington, Warren) joined the growing chorus calling for passage of the Reproductive Health Care Act and legislation to protect access to contraception. The act ([2018-H 7340](#)), sponsored by Rep. Edith H. Ajello (D-Dist. 1, Providence), would conform Rhode Island law to the 1973 landmark Supreme Court ruling *Roe vs. Wade* and subsequent court decisions.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Shanley, Sen. Satchell seek \$15 minimum wage for caregivers**
Rep. Evan Patrick Shanley (D-Dist. 24, Warwick) and Sen. Adam J. Satchell (D-Dist. 9, West Warwick) have introduced legislation that would raise wages for direct service professionals who provide care to individuals with developmental disabilities. The legislation ([2018-H 7680](#), [2018-S 2478](#)) would phase in a minimum wage for direct service professionals to \$15 over a three-year period.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Perez bill would protect interpreters from testifying in courts**
Rep. Ramon A. Perez (D-Dist. 13, Providence, Johnston) has introduced legislation ([2018-H 8006](#)) that would provide that limited English proficient (LEP) interpreters shall not be compelled to testify in any civil or criminal action when such communication is privileged pursuant to statutory or common law.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Mendonça calls for improved school safety in Rhode Island**
Rep. Kenneth J. Mendonça (R-Dist. 72, Middletown, Portsmouth) will introduce legislation to reimburse public schools for conducting a security evaluation to determine the best ways to keep children safe. The Rhode Island Public School Safety Evaluation Program Fund would allocate \$650,000 from the state's general fund to reimburse schools for conducting security evaluations. The program would last one year and would be overseen by the Rhode Island Department of Education.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Bill would require fossil fuel plant developers to invest in renewable energy**
Sen. Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) has introduced legislation ([2018-S 2508](#)) to require developers of new fossil fuel-burning power plants to make an investment in renewable energy equal to at least 20 percent the cost of their plant.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Vella-Wilkinson organizes Veterans and Military Outreach Day**
The House of Representatives hosted its second annual Military and Veterans Outreach Day. The event, which was organized by Rep. Camille F.J. Vella-Wilkinson (D-Dist. 21, Warwick), gave veterans and their families an opportunity to network

and get a greater understanding of the resources available to them.

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

▪ **Rally urges raises for direct-care workers for developmentally disabled**

Hundreds of Rhode Islanders gathered in the State House rotunda in support of better wages for workers who provide direct care to the intellectual and developmentally disabled in Rhode Island. Sen. Louis P. DiPalma (D-Dist. 12, Middletown, Newport, Little Compton, Tiverton) and Rep. Teresa Tanzi (D-Dist. 34, South Kingstown, Narragansett) spoke at the rally.

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