

May 25, 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>



- **Red flag bill, bump stocks ban pass Senate**

The Senate approved two bills to prevent gun violence and mass shootings: a ban ([2018-S 2292A](#)) on bump stocks and other rapid-fire gun modifications sponsored by Sen. James E. Seveney (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol, Tiverton); and “red flag” legislation ([2018-S 2492A](#)) that would allow courts to disarm individuals who are believed by law enforcement to represent a violent threat to themselves or others, sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence). Both bills now go to the House, which has approved companion bills ([2018-H 7075Aaa](#), [2018-H 7688Aaa](#)) sponsored by Rep. Robert E. Craven (D-Dist. 32, North Kingstown) and Rep. Dennis M. Canario (D-Dist. 71, Portsmouth, Tiverton, Little Compton), respectively.

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- **Senate OKs McCaffrey bill that would protect DACA Dreamers**

The Rhode Island Senate passed legislation ([2018-S 2678A](#)) introduced by Senate Majority Leader Michael J. McCaffrey (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) that 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 moves to the House of Representatives, which has passed similar legislation ([2018-H 7982A](#)) introduced by Rep. Shelby Maldonado (D-Dist. 56, Central Falls).

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More...

- **Senate passes Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act**

The Rhode Island State Senate passed important amendments to the Rhode Island’s sexual offender registration and community notification laws. The legislation ([2018-S 2586A](#)) was sponsored by Sen. Hanna Gallo (D-Dist. 27, Cranston, West Warwick). The act would implement several registration and notification procedures of the federal Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act. The measure now moves to the House of Representatives, where similar legislation ([2018-H 7541](#)) has been introduced by Rep. Robert E. Craven, Sr. (D -District 32, North Kingstown). [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House OKs McNamara bill to add rights, responsibilities to driver’s ed**

The House of Representatives has passed legislation ([2018-H 7194](#)) introduced by Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) that would require driver’s education courses to include lessons on what drivers should do if pulled over by a law enforcement officer. The bill also requires driver's instruction courses and tests to include instruction and information on the rights of drivers during a traffic stop. The measure now moves to the Senate for consideration. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate votes to extend foreclosure mediation law**

The Senate approved legislation ([2018-S 2270A](#)) sponsored by Sen. Harold M. Metts (D-Dist. 6, Providence) to extend until 2023 an expiring law that requires mortgage lenders to initiate and participate in mediation efforts with homeowners facing foreclosure in an effort to prevent it. The bill now goes to the House, where Rep. Mary Duffy Messier (D-Dist. 62, Pawtucket) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2018-H 7385](#)). [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate passes Seveney bill to include behavioral counseling as primary care visit**

The Senate passed legislation introduced by Sen. James A. Seveney (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol, Tiverton) that would require health insurers to include behavioral health counseling as a primary care visit. Under the provisions of the bill ([2018-S 2540Aaa](#)) behavioral health counseling visits and medication maintenance visits would be included as primary care visits for patient cost-sharing requirements under the provisions of a health plan. The measure now moves to the House of Representatives, where similar legislation ([2018-H 7806](#)) has been introduced by Rep. Grace Diaz (D-Dist. 11, Providence). [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate OKs bill to provide new home-based care option**

The Senate approved legislation ([2018-S 2734A](#)) sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence) to establish in Rhode Island the “independent provider” model of at-home care for the elderly or disabled, which allows consumers to hire and manage caregivers of their choice while the state takes on responsibilities like setting caregivers’ wages, qualification standards and hours. The bill will proceed to the House, where Rep. Christopher R. Blazejewski (D-Dist. 2, Providence) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2018-H 7803](#)). [Click here to see news release.](#)

- **House passes bill to ban ‘gay or trans panic’ defense**
The House approved legislation ([2018-H 7066aa](#)) sponsored by Rep. Kenneth A. Marshall (D-Dist. 68, Bristol, Warren) to prevent defense attorneys from trying to get their clients a lighter sentence or a commutation to a lower charge by arguing that a crime such as murder or assault was the result of shock caused by the perpetrator’s discovery of the victim’s gender identity or homosexuality. The bill will go to the Senate.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **DiPalma bill to create young adult extension of care program passes Senate**
Sen. Louis P. DiPalma’s (D-Dist. 12, Middletown, Little Compton, Newport, Tiverton) legislation ([2018-S 2022Aaa](#)) that would create a young adult voluntary extension of care program to extend the age of foster care from age 18 to age 21 was passed by the Rhode Island Senate. The program would offer a range of programs and services to ensure successful transitions to independence and adulthood for young adults in foster care. The measure now moves to the House of Representatives, where similar legislation ([2018-H 7110](#)) has been proposed by Rep. Deborah Ruggiero (D-Dist. 74, Jamestown, Middletown).
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- **Rep. Craven’s bill amending speed camera legislation passes the House**
Rep. Robert E. Craven’s (D-Dist. 32, North Kingstown) legislation ([2018-H 7956A](#)) that amends the authorization for municipalities to use speed camera in school zones passed the House of Representatives. The bill mandates more signage for automated school-zone-speed-enforcement system locations and it lowers the amount of the fine from \$95 to \$50 for violations. Also, the violations cannot be reflected on a person’s driving record and the hours of operation are restricted from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. during school days only.
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