

State of Rhode Island

JOURNAL

-OF THE-

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY SESSION of the General Assembly begun and held at the State House in the City of Providence on Tuesday, the Seventh Day of January in the year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Six.

Volume 153, No. 11

Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Eleventh Day

The House of Representatives meets at the State House in Providence on Tuesday, February 10, 2026, and is called to order at 4:03 o'clock P.M. by the Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi, Speaker.

The roll is called, and a quorum is declared present with 66 members present and 9 members absent as follows:

PRESENT – 66: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Ackerman, Ajello, Alzate, Azzinaro, Batista, Bennett, Biah, Blazejewski, Boylan, Brien, Caldwell, Carson, Casey, Chippendale, Cortvriend, Corvese, Costantino, Cotter, Cruz, Dawson, DeSimone, Donovan, Edwards, Fascia, Felix, Fellela, Finkelman, Fogarty, Furtado, Giraldo, Handy, Hopkins, Kazarian, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Lima, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Nardone, Newberry, Noret, O'Brien, Perez, Phillips, Place, Read, Roberts, Sanchez, Santucci, Serpa, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Spears, Stewart, Tanzi, and Voas.

ABSENT – 9: Representatives Abney, Baginski, Casimiro, Craven, Diaz, Hull, Paplauskas, Potter, and Quattrocchi.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi presents Representative Jose F. Batista, who delivers the Invocation and leads the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

(For Invocation, see Appendix, this Journal.)

APPROVAL OF RECORD

By unanimous consent, the House Journal of Thursday, February 5, 2026, is approved.

COMMUNICATIONS

Representative Grace Diaz is unable to attend session today, Tuesday, February 10, 2026.
Representative Brandon C. Potter is unable to attend session today, Tuesday, February 10, 2026.

CALENDAR

From the Calendar are taken:

IN ORDER FOR TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2026:

1. 2026-H 7408 SUB A

BY Abney

ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO MAKING REVISED APPROPRIATIONS IN SUPPORT OF FY 2026 RELATING TO ROGER WILLIAMS MEDICAL CENTER AND OUR LADY OF FATIMA HOSPITAL

Committee on Finance recommends indefinite postponement of the original bill and passage of Substitute A.

Vice-Chairman Slater moves passage of the act, seconded by Majority Leader Blazejewski, Representatives Carson, Marszalkowski, McEntee, Caldwell, Donovan, O'Brien, Ajello, Fogarty, Cortvriend, Azzinaro, Biah, Corvese, Slater, Tanzi, Edwards, Bennett, Solomon, Casey, Alzate, Voas, Shallcross Smith, Deputy Majority Whip Ackerman, and Majority Whip Kazarian.

By unanimous consent, Vice-Chairman Slater, seconded by Majority Leader Blazejewski, offers a written motion to amend.

FLOOR AMENDMENT
TO

2026 -- H 7408 SUBSTITUTE A

AN ACT RELATING TO MAKING REVISED APPROPRIATIONS IN SUPPORT OF FY 2026 RELATING TO ROGER WILLIAMS MEDICAL CENTER AND OUR LADY OF FATIMA HOSPITAL

Mr. Speaker:

I hereby move to amend 2026 -- H 7408 SUBSTITUTE A, entitled "AN ACT RELATING TO MAKING REVISED APPROPRIATIONS IN SUPPORT OF FY 2026 RELATING TO ROGER WILLIAMS MEDICAL CENTER AND OUR LADY OF FATIMA HOSPITAL", as follows:

- 1. On page 5, line 16, by deleting all language thereon.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Abney

Vice-Chairman Slater discusses the amendment.

The motion to amend prevails on a roll call vote, 66 members voting in the affirmative and 0 members voting in the negative, as follows:

YEAS - 66: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Ackerman, Ajello, Alzate, Azzinaro, Batista, Bennett, Biah, Blazejewski, Boylan, Brien, Caldwell, Carson, Casey, Chippendale, Cortvriend, Corvese, Costantino, Cotter, Cruz, Dawson, DeSimone, Donovan, Edwards, Fascia, Felix, Fellela, Finkelman, Fogarty, Furtado, Giraldo, Handy, Hopkins, Kazarian, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Lima, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Nardone, Newberry, Noret, O'Brien, Perez, Phillips, Place, Read, Roberts, Sanchez, Santucci, Serpa, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Spears, Stewart, Tanzi, Voas.

NAYS - 0:

RECUSED - 0:

Representatives Lima and Morales discuss the amended act.

The bill marked Substitute "A" is read and passed, as amended, and the original bill indefinitely postponed, on a roll call vote, 67 members voting in the affirmative and 0 members voting in the negative as follows:

YEAS - 67: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Abney, Ackerman, Ajello, Alzate, Azzinaro, Batista, Bennett, Biah, Blazejewski, Boylan, Brien, Caldwell, Carson, Casey, Chippendale, Cortvriend, Corvese, Costantino, Cotter, Cruz, Dawson, DeSimone, Donovan, Edwards, Fascia, Felix, Fellela, Finkelman, Fogarty, Furtado, Giraldo, Handy, Hopkins, Kazarian, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Lima, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Nardone, Newberry, Noret, O'Brien, Perez, Phillips, Place, Read, Roberts, Sanchez, Santucci, Serpa, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Spears, Stewart, Tanzi, Voas.

NAYS - 0:

RECUSED - 0:

By unanimous consent, the House returns to:

TRANSMITTAL

By unanimous consent, 2026 H-7408 SUB A, on the Clerk's desk, is ordered to be transmitted to the Honorable Senate, forthwith.

(For Transmittals to Governor, see Appendix of this Journal.)

GUESTS

Representative Stewart, in commemoration of Black History Month and the enduring legacy of the 3rd Rhode Island Regiment, extends a warm welcome to the House Chamber to Jason Roomes of the First Rhode Island Regiment and a proud descendant of Caesar Rome; Juliette Yeboah-Roomes of the Roomes family; and James Winters and Victoria Johnson from the Newport Chapter of the NAACP. Speaker Shekarchi welcomes them to the House.

In recognition of Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Week, Chairwoman Alzate is pleased to extend a warm welcome. She is honored to introduce Heart Warrior Tristen Sarmiento, along with his supportive parents, Norelys Consuegra and Salvador Sarmiento, and his brother, Ashton. Speaker Shekarchi welcomes them to the House.

Representative Kislak warmly welcomes Lily Neves, a student at Roger Williams University, who will be her intern for this session.

Representative Kislak, in recognition of Children's Dental Health Month, warmly welcomes the Rhode Island Dental Association President, Dr. Fotini Dionisopoulos, Rhode Island Oral Health Coalition Vice President, Megan Daniel, from the Rhode Island Dental Hygienists Association, Chantel Janeiro, from UnitedHealthcare -RIte Smiles Dental Program, Marie Jones-Bridges, and State Dentist Dr. Samuel Zwetchkenbaum to the House.

Representative Kislak welcomes to the House Jeff and Sherri Simmons, Leah Creiglow, Scott Shuler, Kevin White, and Ron Poirier from the Ranked Choice Voting Demonstration, and extends her gratitude to everyone who participated in the Chocolate Election.

Chairwoman Shallcross Smith announces that United Way's National 211 Day is a day dedicated to recognizing the vital role of the 211 networks in connecting individuals with essential resources and support. This observance underscores the importance of strengthening our communities and ensuring help is available when needed. In honor of this important day, she warmly welcomes United Way of Rhode Island President and CEO Cortney Nicolato, Cristina Amadeo, Senior Director of Community Services, and Seileak Huoth, Data & Systems Manager, to the House.

Representative Fellela warmly welcomes James Parisi and his wife, Rosemarie, from The Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals to the House. She congratulates James on his retirement and wishes him all the best in this new chapter.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice-Chairwoman Fellela announces that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs will meet today, at the rise of the House, in Room 135 of the State House.

Vice-Chairman Slater announces that the Committee on Finance will meet today, at the rise of the House, in Room 35 of the State House.

Chairwoman Donovan announces that the Committee on Health & Human Services will meet today, at the rise of the House, in the House Lounge of the State House.

PROXY VOTES

Majority Leader Blazejewski announces, pursuant to Rule 33(e), authorizing Proxy Votes, he has received a request from Chairman Abney to be recorded in the affirmative for item #1.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Majority Leader Blazejewski announces the next House session will be tomorrow, Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 4:00 p.m. There are no sessions or committee hearings on Thursday.

A reminder that Speaker Shekarchi has extended the bill deadline to the end of the session on Tuesday, February 24, 2026, which is the Tuesday we return from recess. Members must deliver their legislation to the Legislative Council office no later than Tuesday, February 17th, by the close of the business day. The Legislative Council needs time to prepare the bills for you. After Thursday, February 17th, any introductions of legislation will be subject to Rule 7(d) of the House Rules.

IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION

House Resolution No. 7598

BY Kislak, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Morales, Corvese, Kennedy, Ajello, Edwards, Solomon

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY OF 2026, AS "NATIONAL CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC3502/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Representative Kislak requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Representative Kislak discusses the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Representative Kislak, seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

House Resolution No. 7599

BY Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Shallcross Smith, Fogarty, Ajello, Kennedy, Edwards, Solomon, Tanzi, Boylan

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY 10TH, 2026, AS "211 DAY" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND HONORING UNITED WAY 211 FOR ITS SERVICE TO RHODE ISLANDERS {LC4654/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Chairwoman Shallcross Smith requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Chairwoman Shallcross Smith discusses the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Chairwoman Shallcross Smith, seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

House Resolution No. 7600

BY Fellela, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Serpa, Corvese, Bennett, Azzinaro, Ackerman, McNamara

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING JAMES PARISI ON HIS RETIREMENT AFTER THREE DECADES OF EXEMPLARY SERVICE AS A LOBBYIST FOR THE RHODE ISLAND FEDERATION OF TEACHERS AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS {LC4275/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, on behalf of Speaker Shekarchi, Representative Fellela requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Representative Fellela and Speaker Shekarchi discuss the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Representative Fellela, seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

House Resolution No. 7601

BY Alzate, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Furtado, McGaw, Stewart, Kazarian, Kennedy, Ajello

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING FEBRUARY 7TH THROUGH THE 14TH OF 2026, TO BE "CONGENITAL HEART DEFECT AWARENESS WEEK" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC3501/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Chairwoman Alzate requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Chairwoman Alzate discusses the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Chairwoman Alzate, seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

House Resolution No. 7602

BY Stewart, Shekarchi, Blazjewski, Chippendale, Biah, Felix, Alzate, Morales, Hull, Diaz
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING FEBRUARY 10, 2026, AS "THE 3RD RHODE ISLAND REGIMENT/BLACK REGIMENT RECOGNITION DAY" TO COMMEMORATE THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BLACK SOLDIERS DURING THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR {LC3503/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Representative Stewart requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Representative Stewart discusses the resolution.

Read and passed, on a motion of Representative Stewart seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a voice vote.

By unanimous consent, the House returns to:

TRANSMITTAL

By unanimous consent, all matters on the clerk's desk are ordered to be transmitted to His Excellency, the Governor, to the Honorable Senate and the Honorable Secretary of State forthwith.

(For Transmittals to Governor, see Appendix of this Journal.)

DESK HELD OPEN

The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi announces that the desk will be held open.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:47 o'clock P.M. on motion of Representative Nardone, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Helen Quinn, seconded by Leaders Blazjewski and Chippendale, the House adjourns, on a unanimous rising vote.

Diane M. DePina
Recording Clerk

APPENDIX

INVOCATION

REPRESENTATIVE JOSE F. BATISTA

Dear God, Black History Month is a time of reflection and education. It is a celebration of the many accomplishments of African Americans. Their history is our history. It is also a reminder of the long, unfinished struggle to be treated equally. Let us pray that all Americans together recognize and honor our shared history. Amen.

APPENDIX

CALENDAR

IN ORDER FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2026:

1. 2026-H 7301

BY Carson

ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION REINSTATING THE LIFE OF AND EXTENDING THE REPORTING AND EXPIRATION DATES OF THE SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO REVIEW AND PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICIES THAT DEAL WITH NUMEROUS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SHORT-TERM RENTALS ISSUES

Committee on Municipal Government & Housing recommends passage.

2. 2026-H 7407

BY Baginski

ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- THE HOSPITAL CONVERSIONS ACT

Committee on Health & Human Services recommends passage.

Francis McCabe
Clerk of the House

Friday, February 6, 2026

Updated: Tuesday, February 10, 2026