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 fifth day of January in the year of Our Lord two thousand and twenty-one.

Volume 148, No.1 Tuesday, January 5, 2021 First Day

The House of Representatives meets at the Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Providence, Tuesday, January 5, 2021 and is called to order at 2:01 o'clock P.M., by the Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Senior Representative from Newport.

APPROVAL OF RECORD

By unanimous consent, the House Journal of Wednesday, December, 16, 2020, is approved.

INVOCATION

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney presents Father Robert L. Marciano, pastor of St. Kevin's Parish in Warwick, who delivers the Invocation.

(For Invocation, see Appendix, this Journal.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Representative Nathan W. Biah, Sr. to lead the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE GOVERNOR

State of Rhode Island

SECRETARY OF STATE
PUBLIC INFORMATION
CENTER
2020 JAN -4 PM 2:57

Gina M. Raimondo
Governor

GUBERNATORIAL PROCLAMATION
CONVENING THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

January 4, 2021

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2020, I declared a state of emergency due to the dangers to health and life posed by COVID-19 and such declaration has been extended until at least January 20, 2021;

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that spreads easily from person to person and may result in serious illness or death;

WHEREAS, public health experts have determined that it is possible to transmit COVID-19 even before a person shows symptoms and through aerosol transmission;

WHEREAS, since March, the State has issued numerous executive orders, emergency regulations and policy guides geared towards curbing the spread of COVID-19, with such measures including working and meeting remotely, masking, physical distancing and sanitary measures;

WHEREAS, both houses of the General Assembly wish to convene to consider various matters they deem appropriate while ensuring the safety of their members and staff;

WHEREAS, both houses of the General Assembly seek larger, less crowded, meeting spaces than currently exist in the Rhode Island State House, allowing for better

Gubernatorial Proclamation
January 4, 2021
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ventilation and permitting adequate social distancing while members and staff conduct necessary business;

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island Constitution suggests that the General Assembly must convene in the State House except under extraordinary circumstances, including the existence of epidemic or contagious disease; and

WHEREAS, Article IX, section 7 of the Rhode Island Constitution provides: "The governor may, on extraordinary occasions, convene the general assembly at any town or city in this state, at any time not provided for by law: and in the case of danger from the prevalence of epidemic or contagious disease, in the place in which the general assembly is by law to meet, or to which it may have been adjourned, or for other urgent reasons, the governor may by proclamation convene said assembly at any other place within the state."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GINA M. RAIMONDO, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island pursuant to Article IX, section 7 of the Rhode Island Constitution, do hereby:

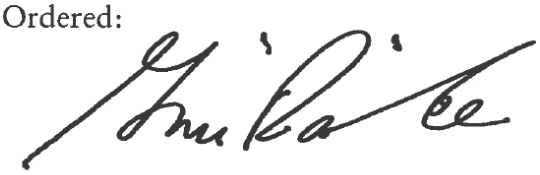
1. Convene either or both houses of the Rhode Island General Assembly in session commencing the week of Monday, January 4, 2021.

2. The Rhode Island House of Representatives may convene at the Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Providence. The Rhode Island Senate may convene at Rhode Island College in Providence.

3. The two houses of the Rhode Island General Assembly, meeting in the respective locations, may conduct their respective sessions and consider any matter as either or both houses deem appropriate.

This Proclamation shall take effect immediately and will remain in effect until such time as both houses of the General Assembly stand in adjournment.

So Ordered:



Gina M. Raimondo

Read and placed on file.

COMMUNICATION

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney announces the receipt of the following communication:

January 5, 2021

To the Honorable House of Representatives:

I, Nellie M. Gorbea, Secretary of State, hereby certify the following list of members elected to the House of Representatives in the General Assembly, in accordance with the certificate of election filed in this office by the Board of Elections on the thirtieth day of November 2020, as provided by Section 22-3-13 of the General Laws of 1956;

Rep. Edith H. Ajello
Rep. Christopher R. Blazejewski
Rep. Nathan W. Biah
Rep. Rebecca M. Kislak
Rep. Marcia P. Ranglin-Vassell
Rep. Raymond A. Hull
Rep. David Morales
Rep. John J. Lombardi
Rep. Anastasia P. Williams
Rep. Scott A. Slater
Rep. Grace Diaz
Rep. Jose F. Batista
Rep. Ramon A. Perez
Rep. Charlene Lima
Rep. Barbara Ann Fenton-Fung
Rep. Brandon C. Potter
Rep. Jacquelyn M. Baginski
Rep. Arthur Handy
Rep. Joseph McNamara
Rep. David A. Bennett
Rep. Camille F. Vella-Wilkinson
Rep. Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.
Rep. K. Joseph Shekarchi
Rep. Evan P. Shanley
Rep. Thomas E. Noret
Rep. Patricia L. Morgan
Rep. Patricia A. Serpa
Rep. George A. Nardone
Rep. Sherry Roberts
Rep. Justine A. Caldwell
Rep. Julie A. Casimiro
Rep. Robert E. Craven
Rep. Carol Hagan McEntee
Rep. Teresa A. Tanzi
Rep. Kathleen A. Fogarty
Rep. Blake A. Filippi
Rep. Samuel Angelo Azzinaro
Rep. Brian Patrick Kennedy
Rep. Justin K. Price
Rep. Michael W. Chippendale
Rep. Robert J. Quattrocchi
Rep. Edward T. Cardillo, Jr.
Rep. Deborah A. Fellela
Rep. Gregory J. Costantino
Rep. Mia A. Ackerman
Rep. Mary Ann Shallcross Smith
Rep. David J. Place
Rep. Brian C. Newberry
Rep. Steven J. Lima
Rep. Stephen M. Casey
Rep. Robert D. Phillips
Rep. Alex Daniel Marszalkowski
Rep. Bernard A. Hawkins
Rep. William W. O'Brien
Rep. Arthur J. Corvese
Rep. Joshua J. Giraldo
Rep. James N. McLaughlin
Rep. Carlos Eduardo Tobon
Rep. Jean P. Barros
Rep. Karen Alzate
Rep. Leonela Felix
Rep. Mary Duffy Messier
Rep. Katherine S. Kazarian
Rep. Brianna E. Henries
Rep. Gregg Amore
Rep. Liana M. Cassar
Rep. Jason Knight
Rep. June S. Speakman
Rep. Susan Ann Donovan
Rep. John G. Edwards
Rep. Michelle E. McGaw
Rep. Terri-Denise Cortvriend
Rep. Marvin L. Abney
Rep. Deborah Ruggiero
Rep. Lauren H. Carson

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of the State of Rhode Island on this fifth day of January, A.D. 2021.

Nellie M. Gorbea
Secretary of State

Read and placed on file.

ROLL CALL

The roll is called and a quorum is declared present with 72 members present and 3 members absent as follows:

PRESENT – 72: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Abney, Ackerman, Ajello, Alzate, Amore, Azzinaro, Baginski, Barros, Batista, Bennett, Biah, Blazejewski, Caldwell, Cardillo, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Cassar, Chippendale, Cortvriend, Corvese, Costantino, Craven, Donovan, Edwards, Felix, Fellela, Filippi, Fogarty, Giraldo, Hawkins, Henries, Hull, Kazarian, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Charlene Lima, Steven Lima, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McLaughlin, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Morgan, Nardone, Newberry, Noret, O'Brien, Perez, Phillips, Place, Potter, Price, Quattrocchi, Ranglin-Vassell, Roberts, Ruggiero, Serpa, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Tanzi, Tobon, Vella-Wilkinson and Williams.

ABSENT – 3: Representatives Diaz, Fenton-Fung, Handy.

ADDRESS

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney addresses the members of the House.

OATH OF OFFICE

The Representatives-elect rise, as Secretary of State, Nellie M. Gorbea administers the Oath of Office to all members.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney calls for nominations.

Representative Mary Messier nominates Representative K. Joseph Shekarchi, District 23 in Warwick, to be Speaker of the House of Representatives for the years 2021-2022. Representative Messier discusses the nomination.

(For Representative Messier's remarks see appendix of this Journal.)

The nomination is seconded by Representative Katherine Kazarian. Representative Kazarian offers her remarks.

(For Representative Kazarian's remarks see appendix of this Journal.)

The nomination is also seconded by Representatives Cardillo, O'Brien, Craven, Phillips, Amore, Ackerman, Carson, Hawkins, McEntee, Speakman, Steven Lima, Vella-Wilkinson, Caldwell, Ruggiero, Noret, Donavan, Williams, Batista, Marszalkowski, Shekarchi, Constantino, Serpa, Cortvriend, Baginski, Biah, Fogarty, Charlene Lima, Kennedy, Bennett, Corvese, Hull, Edwards, Slater, Kislak, McNamara, Casey, Giraldo, Tobon, Fella, Solomon, Alzate, Perez, Shallcross Smith, Felix, Casimiro, Shanley, Knight, Blazejewski, Kazarian, Barros, Messier, McLaughlin and Azzinaro.

Representative Michael Chippendale nominates Minority Leader Filippi, to be Speaker of the House of Representatives for the years 2021-2022. Representative Chippendale discusses the nomination.

The nomination is seconded by Representative Brian Newberry. Representative Newberry offers remarks. The nomination is also seconded by Representatives Roberts, Place and Nardone.

The Honorable Marvin Abney asks if there are any other nominations.

Majority Leader Blazejewski seconded by Representative Edwards, moves that nominations be closed. The motion to close nominations prevails, on a voice vote.

Representative Abney asks clerk to take roll call.

The election of Representative K. Joseph Shekarchi of District 23 in Warwick as Speaker of the House for the years 2021-2022 prevails, on a roll call vote, 59 members voting for Representative Shekarchi and 9 members voting for Minority Leader Filippi and 4 members abstaining as follows:

SHEKARCHI - 59 Representatives Abney, Ackerman, Alzate, Amore, Azzinaro, Baginski, Barros, Batista, Bennett, Biah, Blazejewski, Caldwell, Cardillo, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Cortvriend, Corvese, Costantino, Craven, Donovan, Edwards, Felix, Fellela, Fogarty, Giraldo, Hawkins, Hull, Kazarian, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Charlene Lima, Steven Lima, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McLaughlin, McNamara, Messier, Noret, O'Brien, Perez, Phillips, Potter, Serpa, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Shekarchi, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Tanzi, Tobon, Vella-Wilkinson, Williams.

FILIPPI - 9 Representatives Chippendale, Filippi, Morgan, Nardone Newberry, Place, Price, Quattrocchi, Roberts.

ABSTAIN - 4 Representatives Cassar, Henries, McGaw, Morales.

The Chair declares the Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi of District 23 in Warwick is elected Speaker of the House for the years 2021-2022.

OATH OF OFFICE

The House attends while The Honorable Maureen McKenna Goldberg Associate Justice of Rhode Island Supreme Court administers the Oath of Office to the Honorable Speaker.

NOW PRESIDING

The Honorable Marvin Abney turns over the rostrum to the Honorable Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi.

ADDRESSES

The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi addresses the members of the House.

(For Speaker Shekarchi's Address see appendix of this Journal.)

ELECTION OF THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The Honorable Speaker declares the election of Clerk is in order and calls for nominations. Representative Tobon, of Pawtucket seconded by Representative Barros and the entire House of Representatives nominates Francis McCabe to be Clerk of the House for the Session 2021-2022. There being no further nominations, Representative Tobon moves that nominations be closed, seconded by Representative Alzate. The motion to close nominations prevails, on a voice vote.

Representative Tobon moves that Representative Barros be directed to cast one ballot for Francis McCabe to be Clerk of the House for the 2021-2022 Session, seconded by Representative Alzate. The motion prevails by unanimous consent on a voice vote.

Representative Barros casts one ballot for Francis McCabe for the office of the Clerk of the House for the years 2021-2022, seconded by Representative Alzate.

Francis P. McCabe is elected Clerk of the House of the Session 2021-2022.

ELECTION OF RECORDING CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The Honorable Speaker declares the election of a Recording Clerk is in order and calls for nominations.

Representative Kazarian, seconded by Representative Amore, nominates Diane DePina of East Providence to be Recording Clerk of the House for the Session 2021-2022. There being no further nominations, Representative Kazarian seconded by Representative Amore moves that nominations be closed.

The motion to close nominations prevails, on a voice vote.

Representative Kazarian moves that Representative Amore be directed to cast one ballot for Diane M. DePina to be Recording Clerk for the 2021-2022 Session, seconded by Representatives Knight. The motion prevails by unanimous consent on a voice vote.

Representative Amore casts one ballot for Diane DePina for the office of Recording Clerk of the House for the years 2021-2022, seconded by Representative Knight.

Diane M. DePina is elected Recording Clerk of the House of the Session 2021-2022.

OATH OF OFFICE

The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi administers the Oath of Office to the Clerk of the House, Frank McCabe and the Recording Clerk of the House, Diane DePina for the 2021-2022 Session.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence from Representative Grace Diaz:

I regret to inform the House that I cannot be there on Opening Day due to illness. I understand that my vote shall not be counted in the official vote count due to my absence. But had I been present, I would have voted for Representative K. Joseph Shekarchi for Speaker of the House.

Correspondence from Representative Arthur Handy:

I am unable to attend today's session. Had I been present, I would have proudly voted for K. Joseph Shekarchi for Speaker.

Correspondence from Representative-elect Barbara Ann Fenton-Fung:

Due to public health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, I am unable to attend today's inauguration. If present, I would have supported K. Joseph Shekarchi for House Speaker, given his significant efforts to reach out across the aisle to me since the time of the election and his value of my viewpoints as we talked about how to get Rhode Island to a stronger place.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Speaker Shekarchi announces the appointment of the House Committee on Rules for the 2021-2022 session:

Representative Arthur Corvese, Chair
Representative William O'Brien, First Vice Chair
Representative Camille Vella-Wilkinson, Second Vice Chair
Representative Samuel Azzinaro
Representative Julie Casimiro
Representative Grace Diaz
Representative Katherine Kazarian
Representative Brian Kennedy
Representative Alex Marszalkowski
Representative Joseph McNamara
Representative Brian Newberry
Representative Robert Phillips
Representative David Place
Representative Patricia Serpa
Representative Evan Shanley
Representative Scott Slater
Representative Anastasia Williams

Received and placed on file.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Minority Leader Filippi introduces and welcomes Representative Morgan, Barbara Ann Fenton-Fung and he also congratulates Speaker Shekarchi.

Majority Leader Blazejewski congratulates Speaker Shekarchi on his election and welcomes his family Mary Shekarchi, John Shekarchi, Kevin Murphy, Donna Bentfield and Merlin. He would also like to thank Senate President Ruggiero, Majority Leader McCaffrey, Secretary Gorbea and The Honorable Justice Maureen McKenna Goldberg for attending.

Majority Leader Blazejewski would like to give a special congratulations and welcome to the incoming freshmen legislator's and their guest's. He would also like to personally introduce each new freshman by name and District. Representatives Jacquelyn Baginski (17) Cranston, Jose Batista (12) Providence, Nathan Biah (3) Providence, Edward Cardillo, Jr. (42) Johnston, Leonela Felix (61) Pawtucket, Barbara Ann Fenton-Fung (15),Cranston, Brianna Henries (64) East Providence, Steven Lima (49) Woonsocket, Michelle McGaw (71) Portsmouth, David Morales (7) Providence, Patricia Morgan (26) West Warwick, Ramon Perez (13) Providence, Brandon Potter, (16) Cranston and Mary Ann Shallcross Smith (46) Lincoln.

GUESTS ATTENDING INAUGURATION

Michael Davenport, Cisco Batista, Thumbelina Biah, Patricia Cardillo, Maria Felix, Halona Mauricio, Beth Mancini, Fernanda Cazares, Mayra Perez, Kathryn Richard and Ronald R. Smith.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Majority Leader Blazejewski announces that the desk will be left open for introducing and drafting of bills for the next two weeks. Also that we will not be meeting in person at the Vet's again until Tuesday, January 19, 2021.

Speaker Shekarchi welcome's the freshmen legislators to the house and encourages them to reach out with any questions or concerns.

NEW BUSINESS

House Bill No. 5000
BY Corvese
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO ELECTIONS - GENERAL STATE OFFICERS (Enables the general assembly, while in grand committee, to fill a vacancy in the office of the lieutenant governor.) {LC24/1}
01/08/2021 Introduced, referred to House Judiciary

House Bill No. 5001
BY Corvese
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- DISORDERLY CONDUCT -- UNLAWFUL INTERFERENCE WITH TRAFFIC (Criminalizes and sets mandatory minimum felony sentences for the unlawful interference with traffic upon the federal and state highways of this state.) {LC26/1
01/08/2021 Introduced, referred to House Judiciary

House Resolution No. 5002
BY Corvese
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2021 AND 2022 {LC613/1}
01/12/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Resolution No. 5003
BY Speakman, Carson, Cortvriend
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2019 AND 2020 (This resolution would amend the house rules to permit up to ten (10) co-sponsor names to be included on all bills and resolutions.) {LC333/1}
01/12/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Resolution No. 5004
BY Knight
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2019 AND 2020 (Amends Rule 11 of the House of Representatives Rules so that each member would be entitled to membership in at least two (2) standing committees, but any member may waive this requirement upon written notice to the Speaker of the House.) {LC549/1}
01/12/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Resolution No. 5005
BY Potter
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION CONDEMNING THE ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND INSURRECTION COMMITTED AT THE SEAT OF OUR COUNTRY'S DEMOCRACY AND CALLING FOR THE REMOVAL OF PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP {LC533/1}
01/12/2021 Introduced, referred to House Judiciary

House Resolution No. 5006
BY Kislak
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2019 AND 2020 (This resolution would amend the house rules to permit remote voting for house committees and would permit written, in person or video testimony.) {LC273/1}
01/12/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Resolution No. 5007
BY Kislak
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2019 AND 2020 (This resolution would amend the house rules by removing the consent requirements of the majority and minority leaders for suspension of a rule.) {LC278/1}
01/12/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Resolution No. 5008
BY Kislak
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2019 AND 2020 (This resolution would amend the house rules by removing the requirement that a bill not be discharged until after the fiftieth legislative day.) {LC277/1}
01/12/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Resolution No. 5009
BY Kislak
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2019 AND 2020 (This resolution would amend the house rules to require that bills passed out of committee be placed on the floor calendar within seven (7) days.) {LC274/1}
01/12/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Resolution No. 5010
BY Kislak
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2019 AND 2020 (This resolution would amend the house rules to provide that bills that are held for further study may be reconsidered unless the prime sponsor consents to the bill being permanently held for further study.) {LC275/1}
01/12/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Resolution No. 5011
BY Kislak
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2019 AND 2020 (This resolution would amend the house rules to remove appropriations and budget bills from the exemptions to the filing requirements of rule (7)(d).) {LC276/1}
01/12/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Bill No. 5012
BY Slater, O'Brien
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- NURSING HOME STAFFING AND QUALITY CARE ACT (Mandates minimum staffing levels and standards for quality care for nursing homes and their residents.) {LC599/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House Finance

House Bill No. 5013
BY Slater
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- PERSONAL INCOME TAX (Raises the earned income tax credit from fifteen percent (15%) to twenty percent (20%) for tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2021.) {LC220/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House Finance

House Bill No. 5014
BY Slater
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- BUS LANE TRAVEL FINE (Creates a new traffic offense, with a fine, for traveling in a bus lane.) {LC219/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House Finance

House Resolution No. 5015
BY Slater
ENTITLED, JOINT RESOLUTION MAKING AN APPROPRIATION OF $140,000 TO URBAN VENTURES (Authorizes the appropriation of the sum of one hundred and forty thousand dollars ($140,000) to Urban Ventures for operations and to implement activities assisting small businesses within the state of Rhode Island.) {LC228/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House Finance

House Bill No. 5016
BY Slater
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- PROPERTY SUBJECT TO TAXATION -- EXEMPTIONS (Includes the real and tangible personal property of The Providence Community Health Centers, a Rhode Island domestic nonprofit corporation, located in Providence, Rhode Island, on the list of properties exempt from taxation.) {LC309/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House Finance

House Bill No. 5017
BY Slater
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS -- THE EDWARD O. HAWKINS AND THOMAS C. SLATER MEDICAL MARIJUANA ACT (Adds a definition to the term "manufacture" in the medical marijuana chapter.) {LC229/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House H.E.W.

House Bill No. 5018
BY Lombardi
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- CURRICULUM (Directs the council on elementary and secondary education to develop recommendations for a high school curriculum to prepare students for successful postsecondary education and careers in computer science.) {LC247/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House H.E.W.

House Resolution No. 5019
BY Lombardi, Potter, Morales
ENTITLED, JOINT RESOLUTION CREATING A SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION TO STUDY AND ASSESS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AN IMPROVED MEDICARE-FOR-ALL-TYPE SINGLE PAYER PROGRAM IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND (Creates a 19 member commission to study and assess implementing an improved Medicare-for-all-type single payer program in RI, and who would report back to the Senate and House 1 year from the date of passage, and expire 2 years from the date of passage.) {LC16/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House H.E.W.

House Bill No. 5020
BY Slater
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO CRIMINAL PROCEDURE -- EXPUNGEMENT OF CRIMINAL RECORDS (Allows persons with multiple misdemeanors and felonies to seek expungement of up to six convictions provided that convictions for multiple alcohol related offenses or domestic violence offenses and crime of violence are not eligible.) {LC222/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House Judiciary

House Bill No. 5021
BY Slater
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS -- THE EDWARD O. HAWKINS AND THOMAS C. SLATER MEDICAL MARIJUANA ACT (Prevents employers from refusing to hire or discriminating against individuals for marijuana use and positive test results.) {LC225/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House Judiciary

House Resolution No. 5022
BY Lombardi, Potter
ENTITLED, JOINT RESOLUTION TO APPROVE AND PUBLISH AND SUBMIT TO THE ELECTORS A PROPOSITION OF AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE - FOUR YEAR TERMS AND TERM LIMITS FOR REPRESENTATIVES AND SENATORS {LC170/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House Judiciary
(Added to Co-sponsorship is Representative Potter)

House Resolution No. 5023
BY Lombardi
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2019 AND 2020 (This resolution would amend the house rules by providing term limits for house leadership positions.) {LC291/1}
01/13/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Bill No. 5024
BY Caldwell, Price, Casimiro
ENTITLED, AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE EXETER-WEST GREENWICH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT TO ISSUE NOT TO EXCEED $17,840,000 GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE RENOVATION, REHABILITATION, IMPROVEMENT, FURNISHING AND EQUIPPING OF SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL FACILITIES THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, AUDITORIUM AND CLASSROOM IMPROVEMENTS, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, ROOFS, FLOORS, HEATING, VENTILATION, AIR CONDITIONING, ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS, PLAYGROUNDS, ATHLETIC FACILITIES, PARKING AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS, PROVIDED THAT THE AUTHORIZATION SHALL BE REDUCED BY THE AMOUNT OF CERTAIN GRANTS RECEIVED FROM STATE BOND PROCEEDS, FROM THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OR FROM THE RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL BUILDING AUTHORITY (Authorizes the Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District to issue general obligation bonds not to exceed $17,840,000 for school improvements.) {LC11/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House Municipal Government
(Added to Co-sponsorship are Representatives Price, Casimiro)

House Bill No. 5025
BY Newberry
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- NORTH SMITHFIELD - HISTORIC RESIDENCE TAX CREDIT (Allows North Smithfield historic residence owners to become eligible for state historic residence tax credits.) {LC497/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House Municipal Government

House Bill No. 5026
BY McNamara
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES -- RETIREMENT SYSTEM -- MEMBERSHIP AND SERVICE CREDITS (Allows teachers, who are at the top step maximum salary, to retire early.) {LC155/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House H.E.W.

House Bill No. 5027
BY McNamara
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY ACT (Incorporates SurveyWorks school climate indicators for evaluating the performance of LEAs and individual public schools.) {LC150/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House H.E.W.

House Bill No. 5028
BY Newberry, Amore Carson, Noret, Kislak, Casimiro, Fenton-Fung
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- THE CIVIC LITERACY ACT (Requires the implementation of the civic literacy act for all students between the 8th and 12th grades.) {LC524/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House H.E.W.
(Added to Co-sponsorship is Representatives Amore, Carson, Noret, Kislak, Casimiro, Fenton-Fung)

House Bill No. 5029
BY Morales, Potter, Ranglin-Vassell
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- MINIMUM WAGES (Provides that employers pay essential health care facility employees at a rate of one hundred fifty percent (150%) of their regular pay during a declared public health emergency.) {LC240/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House Labor
(Added to Co-sponsorship is Representative Ranglin-Vassell)

House Resolution No. 5030
BY McNamara, Noret, Bennett, Solomon
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING RHODE ISLAND'S ATTORNEY GENERAL TO REVIEW THE RECENT INCREASE IN WATER CHARGES BY THE KENT COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY AND THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION {LC422/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House Corporations
(Added to Co-sponsorship is Representatives Bennett, Solomon)

House Bill No. 5031
BY McNamara, Noret, Casimiro
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATED TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS (Requires the department of transportation, along with the division of motor vehicles and the office of energy resources, to develop, no later than January 1, 2022, a plan for statewide electric vehicle charging station infrastructure.) {LC154/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House Corporations
(Added to Co-sponsorship is Representatives Noret, Casimiro)

House Bill No. 5032
BY Newberry
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- OPEN MEETINGS (Requires that all meetings closed to the public be audio recorded by audio tape or other audio recording device.) {LC525/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House Judiciary

House Resolution No. 5033
BY Donovan
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2019 AND 2020 (This resolution amends the house rules providing that the Speaker would, in his or her discretion, require that members comply with any public health safety measure recommended by the RI DOH while in attendance at any session or committee of the House.) {LC752/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Bill No. 5034
BY Kazarian
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS - SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGES {LC598/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House Judiciary

House Bill No. 5035
BY Kazarian
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY--EMERGENCY GENERATORS REQUIRED (Requires elderly housing complexes of more than 100 residential units provide emergency generators to power all common areas and residential units in building effective 1/1/22.) {LC192/1}
01/15/2021 Introduced, referred to House H.E.W.

House Resolution No. 5036
BY Vella-Wilkinson
ENTITLED, HOUSE RESOLUTION HOUSE RESOLUTION AMENDING THE RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE YEARS 2019-2020 (Amends the Rules of the House for the Years 2019 and 2020 by establishing a procedure for the discipline of a member.) {LC809/1}
01/19/2021 Introduced, referred to House Rules Committee

House Bill No. 5037
BY Perez
ENTITLED, AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY - BORN-ALIVE INFANT PROTECTION ACT (Enacts the Born-Alive Infant Protection Act and provide for the duties and obligations of medical personnel in certain circumstances.) {LC556/1}
01/19/2021 Introduced, referred to House Judiciary

ADJOURNMENT

At 3:37 o'clock P.M. on behalf of Speaker Shekarchi, on motion of Leader Blazejewski, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Jerry Squatrito seconded by Majority Whip Edwards and Minority Leader Filippi the House adjourns, on a unanimous rising vote.

Diane M. DePina
Recording Clerk

APPENDIX

INVOCATION

FATHER ROBERT MARCIANO

Heavenly Father, on whom this nation was founded, and on whom we still rely, we come before you seeking your blessing on our New Speaker and all those who will lead our state. They have stepped forward and with the will of the people will help to guide us in these challenging times.

Inspire their minds, and mold their hearts to hear the needs of those whom they are privileged to serve. As we begin this chapter in the history of our state and nation we give thanks to You, the giver of all good gifts, for each of them. May they always know of our gratitude and prayers for them and for their families for all of the sacrifices that they make for us.

We offer this prayer to You, O gracious Father, for we are, always proud to be, on state, and one Nation, under you God, forever and ever.

AMEN.

APPENDIX

REPRESENTATIVE MARY DUFFY MESSIER'S REMARKS

I am proud to nominate Representative K. Joseph Shekarchi to the position of Speaker of the House of Representatives for the legislative term of 2021 and 2022. He is exactly the Speaker that the House needs to get us through these challenging times.

. As the Majority Leader for the past four years, Joe Shekarchi has proven himself to be sincere, honest and extremely accommodating to all of us. One of his strongest traits is that he is a good listener – he doesn't impart his own views on us, but he actually wants to hear our ideas and our viewpoints.

I have always found him to be extremely approachable and easy to talk to, and he treats everyone with the utmost respect.

Even before officially becoming Speaker, Joe has exerted great leadership. He quickly created a task force to examine the distribution of the COVID vaccine, and appointed a diverse group of members including those from Providence, Central Falls and my home city of Pawtucket – all communities so hard hit by the pandemic. We have already met three times, and he is eager to learn about the unique problems in our cities.

I also admire how quickly he acted in taking charge after he received the overwhelming support of his caucus. He secured this safe and spacious Veterans Auditorium to enable us to safely social distance and smoothly conduct a very successful budget session a few weeks ago.

Even though Joe had never been on the Finance Committee, he worked with Chairman Abney and gathered input from all his colleagues – holding multiple briefings with Democrats and Republicans. He worked closely with the Senate and developed a budget that was approved with huge support and quickly signed by the Governor.

With those accomplishments in just a few short weeks, I am tremendously optimistic about the future of his leadership!

As a retired educator, it heartens me that Joe values the hard work and dedication of our public school teachers and he is deeply concerned about the future of our schools. I also know how passionate he is to tackle other important issues like increasing affordable housing opportunities, making sure our workers earn fair wages, and providing assistance to small businesses.

He has a proven track record of addressing economic issues, and with his steady hand, he will lead this House to the other side of the pandemic and we will turn the fortunes of our state around.

It's not going to be an easy job, but I know that Joe Shekarchi is the right Speaker at this critical point in our state's history.

There's an old saying, attributed to Abraham Lincoln, that "you can please some of the people all the time, and all of the people some of the time. But you can't please all of the people all of the time."

. Joe Shekarchi will do his best to please as many people as possible in his always- respectful manner. But his eyes are wide open and he knows that he won't always please everyone. It is a tough job being Speaker – but Joe Shekarchi is ready!

For those reasons and many more, I enthusiastically submit the name of Representative K. Joseph Shekarchi into nomination as Speaker of the House of Representatives and ask my colleagues to give him their support to lead this chamber for the next two years. Thank you.

APPENDIX

REPRESENTATIVE KATHERINE S. KAZARIAN'S REMARKS

I rise today, in a very different place than I was in two years ago, to second the nomination of Representative K. Joseph Shekarchi for Speaker of the people's house – our House of Representatives.

I make this nomination on behalf of my dear friend, Representative Grace Diaz, who is unable to be with us today. Unfortunately, Grace is battling the ugly COVID-19 virus. Her experience has been brutal, but Grace is strong. Let us all continue to keep Grace in our thoughts and pray for her to have a speedy recovery.

Joe Shekarchi is not your average Joe. He is a powerful advocate for important causes – he passed legislation that mandates health insurance coverage for mastectomy procedures and he champions legislation to protect our beloved pets and animals. He is a skilled attorney. He is a terrific listener. He is humble and conscientious. Most of all, Joe cares about many of the same issues that I care about: issues pertaining to gender equality, community development, violence prevention, affordable housing, public education, childcare and economic stability.

Indeed, it takes a special leader to win over the support of the many diverse members who now comprise this chamber. Joe won our support because he follows through on his promises and he keeps his word. He won our support because we know him to be inclusive and transparent. He won our support because he will empower us to be the leaders that our constituents need us to be.

Whenever I had a question or required anything, Joe had an open door. His assistance is always direct, honest and fair. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once stated that, "A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus." Everyone who knows Joe knows that he is a master at bringing people together and molding consensus on the most important issues of our day.

Last year, as if overnight, we were suddenly faced with unprecedented, unparalleled adversity. Many of our families, friends, and neighbors are struggling. Many are without employment, housing, healthcare or even, food. Many have been infected, some have even passed -- the loss is immeasurable.

Our constituents are looking to their leaders, to all of us in this room, for guidance. They are asking us to work together, to find the best solutions, and to position our State to come out of this crisis better and stronger than we were before we entered it. All great leaders, no matter what challenge they face, are determined to find solutions to problems, they are willing to collaborate in order to find the best answers, and most importantly, they are skilled at listening and learning from others. These characteristics are the qualities that I see in each of you, and they are the qualities that I know Joe Shekarchi possesses. A vote for Joe Shekarchi today is an affirmation to our constituents that we are ready to get to work on their behalf. It is for those reasons and many more than I am proud to vote for Joe Shekarchi as our next speaker of the House, and I urge you all to do the same.

APPENDIX

SPEAKER SHEKARCHI'S ADDRESS

Members of the House, Honored Guests, Family and Friends:

To my colleagues in the House, I offer a most sincere thank you for the faith and confidence that you have placed in me today. I pledge to work every day with all of you to ensure that we are a member-driven, inclusive House of Representatives.

I'd like to extend my deepest appreciation to Chairman Marvin Abney for doing an outstanding job as the presiding officer at this first session and to Representatives Mary Messier and Representative Katherine Kazarian for your kind words in placing my name into nomination – and I know Representative Grace Diaz is watching at home and wanted the opportunity to second my nomination as well.

I'd especially like to thank Majority Leader Chris Blazejewski for lending me great assistance throughout the transition process. Chris will be a terrific Majority Leader.

I'd also like to thank Supreme Court Justice Maureen McKenna Goldberg for swearing me in and Secretary of State Nellie Gorbea for administering the oath of office to all of us. I'm so pleased that Governor Gina Raimondo, Senate President Ruggerio and Senate Majority Leader McCaffrey are here on this special day.

I would be remiss to not thank former Speaker Nicholas Mattiello for his many years of public service. I am confident that history will look kindly upon his legislative accomplishments.

Thank you all.

Sixty years ago, a short drive up the road from here, at the Massachusetts State House, President Kennedy gave farewell remarks to his home state just before assuming the presidency.

His remarks that day still serve and guide us as public servants. He challenged those of us who have been entrusted with public office to question ourselves in four fundamental ways:

First – the president asked - are we truly people of **courage**? Do we have the courage to withstand public pressure, as well as private greed?

Secondly, are we truly people of **judgment**? Can we perceive judgment of the future as well as the past – can we recognize our own mistakes as well as the mistakes of others? Do we have enough wisdom to know that we don't know everything, and do we have the humility to admit it?

Third, are we truly people of **integrity** – who never run away from the principles we believe or the people who believe in them? Are we people who will never divert from the sacred public trust … not for financial gain or political ambition?

And finally, are we truly people of **dedication** – with an honor devoted solely to the public good and never compromised for any individual or group, or private obligation?

Courage. Judgment. Integrity. Dedication.

These ideals have guided me as I've worked to honor the friendship and trust the constituents of my beloved city of Warwick have blessed me with over the years. These same ideals will guide me as I honor the confidence you have placed in me, on behalf of your constituents, in this new office.

The desire to honor and serve my constituents has brought me here today, but the unconditional love and support of my family through the years has been my inspiration. I know my late Mother is watching over me with pride today while my Father, who is 94, is watching me at home.

My father came to America as an immigrant in the 1950's. He became a successful surgeon and always went the extra mile to help others. I learned the power of kindness from the actions of my parents… and I also learned that kindness should never be mistaken for weakness. The qualities instilled in me by my parents have led to an ethic of hard work, honesty and compassion that I will apply to the difficult tasks before us.

The COVID crisis has dealt a crippling blow to our communities and our state. None of us has escaped its grip. We must adapt to new realities and find new solutions in order to achieve what the Constitution of the United States requires of us all - establish Justice, promote the general Welfare, and secure the blessings of Liberty.

The past year has forced us to confront our failings in this regard. As the economic tide went out, it exposed a society where in too many ways justice has <u>not</u> been established equally, the general welfare has <u>not</u> been promoted fairly and the blessings of liberty remain out of reach for far too many of our fellow Rhode Islanders, through absolutely no fault of their own.

We need to do better – much better. And while I am humbled by the confidence that you have put in me, I am extremely confident in all of you. I know that many of the solutions are already present in this room, in you.

So, in the coming months, to honor our oaths of office, we must all collaborate to prioritize some difficult challenges.

In the short term, we will work – every day – to ease the pain and lighten the burden of the pandemic, particularly for those communities who have borne the brunt of it.

We will listen to and support our first responders, our health care professionals and our teachers.

We will find new ways to support and protect our small businesses, lift up the unemployed, and creatively assist our families.

We will work with the Governor and the Senate to achieve the rapid and effective distribution of the vaccine.

And in the long term, we will roll up our sleeves, clear away the rubble of the pandemic, and build a new and better Rhode Island.

We will strive for a Rhode Island that provides a just, secure and prosperous future for everyone, regardless of our zip code, regardless of the color of our skin, and regardless of how long their family has proudly claimed the title of "American."

This coming session, I am looking to all of you to continue our "Lively Experiment". I am looking for your new ideas, new energy and new perspectives. As with all experiments, honest mistakes will be made. But I believe that a mistake can be a powerful teacher.

As you know, my goal for this office is to facilitate collaboration and consensus in pursuit of the common good. My approach will be different, but it should never be confused with an unwillingness to make difficult, final decisions at the appropriate time … and make them stick. Let us pledge to listen to each other, and always treat each other with respect and kindness.

I will continue to be anchored by the values instilled in me by my hardworking parents. I will also be guided by the values so eloquently addressed by President Kennedy sixty years ago: Courage, judgment, integrity and dedication. I ask you to join me in committing to these things. To my colleagues in this chamber, I believe in you.

Today, we humbly begin our duty to solve the problems of our day. You have each earned the sacred trust of the voters in your districts. I await your unique perspectives and ideas.

Let us resolve, after an honest discourse, to come together to make our mark on this great state. I am certain that many of the answers are in this room - let us find them together. I am honored to embark on this new journey with each and every one of you.

Thank you. God Bless you all.