

# State of Rhode Island

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# JOURNAL

-OF THE-

# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

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Volume 151, No. 18

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Eighteenth-Day

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The House of Representatives meets at the State House in Providence on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, and is called to order at 4:15 o'clock P.M. by the Honorable K. Joseph Shekarchi, Speaker.

The roll is called and a quorum is declared present with 70 members present and 5 members absent as follows:

**PRESENT** – 70: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Abney, Ajello, Alzate, Azzinaro, Baginski, Batista, Bennett, Blazejewski, Boylan, Brien, Caldwell, Cardillo, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Cortvriend, Corvese, Costantino, Cotter, Craven, Cruz, Dawson, DeSimone, Diaz, Donovan, Edwards, Felix, Fellela, Fenton-Fung, Finkelman, Fogarty, Giraldo, Handy, Henries, Hull, Kazarian, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Morgan, Nardone, Newberry, Noret, O'Brien, Perez, Phillips, Place, Potter, Quattrocchi, Roberts, Sanchez, Serpa, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Spears, Stewart, Tanzi, Vella-Wilkinson and Voas.

**ABSENT** – 5: Representatives Ackerman, Biah, Chippendale, Lima and Rea.

## INVOCATION

The Honorable Speaker presents Representative Mary Ann Shallcross Smith 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, March 7, 2024, is approved.

RHODE ISLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY



House of Representatives

**CO-SPONSORSHIP REMOVAL REQUEST**  
**2024**

Pursuant to House Rule 15(g)(ii), Brian Kennedy  
hereby requests the removal of their co-sponsorship of Bill # H - 7605  
entitled: Unfair Claims Settlement Practices Act  
which is currently in the House Committee on Corporations

Signature: Brian Patrick Kennedy  
House District # 38  
Date: March 12, 2024

Acknowledgement:  
[Signature]  
Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker

*NOTE: This request must be submitted to the Clerk of the House, and House Recording Clerk who will retain the original and a copy to be placed in the committee's original bill file*

## CALENDAR

From the Calendar are taken:

**IN ORDER FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024:**

- 1. 2024-H 7244 SUB A**  
**BY** Ackerman  
**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- GENERAL POWERS

Committee on Municipal Government & Housing recommends indefinite postponement of the original bill and passage of Substitute A.

Chairman Casey moves passage of the act, seconded by Majority Leader Blazejewski, Representatives Marszalkowski and Voas.

Chairman Casey discusses the act.

The bill marked Substitute "A" is read and passed, and the original bill indefinitely postponed, on a roll call vote, 70 members voting in the affirmative and 0 members voting in the negative as follows:

YEAS - 70: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Abney, Ajello, Alzate, Azzinaro, Baginski, Batista, Bennett, Blazejewski, Boylan, Brien, Caldwell, Cardillo, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Cortvriend, Corvese, Costantino, Cotter, Craven, Cruz, Dawson, DeSimone, Diaz, Donovan, Edwards, Felix, Fellela, Fenton-Fung, Finkelman, Fogarty, Giraldo, Handy, Henries, Hull, Kazarian, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Morgan, Nardone, Newberry, Noret, O'Brien, Perez, Phillips, Place, Potter, Quattrocchi, Roberts, Sanchez, Serpa, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Spears, Stewart, Tanzi, Vella-Wilkinson, Voas.

NAYS - 0:

RECUSED - 0:

- 2. 2024-H 7424**  
**BY** Shanley  
**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO COMMERCIAL LAW -- GENERAL REGULATORY PROVISIONS -- FILING OF ASSUMED NAME

Committee on Corporations recommends passage.

Chairman Solomon moves passage of the act, seconded by Majority Leader Blazejewski, Representatives Phillips, Bennett, Floor Manager Edwards, Representatives McGaw, McEntee, Cortvriend and Tanzi.

Chairman Solomon discusses the act.

Read and passed, on a roll call vote, 70 members voting in the affirmative and 0 members voting in the negative as follows:

YEAS - 70: The Honorable Speaker Shekarchi and Representatives Abney, Ajello, Alzate, Azzinaro, Baginski, Batista, Bennett, Blazejewski, Boylan, Brien, Caldwell, Cardillo, Carson, Casey, Casimiro, Cortvriend, Corvese, Costantino, Cotter, Craven, Cruz, Dawson, DeSimone, Diaz, Donovan, Edwards, Felix, Fellela, Fenton-Fung, Finkelman, Fogarty, Giraldo, Handy, Henries, Hull, Kazarian, Kennedy, Kislak, Knight, Lombardi, Marszalkowski, McEntee, McGaw, McNamara, Messier, Morales, Morgan, Nardone, Newberry, Noret, O'Brien, Perez, Phillips, Place, Potter, Quattrocchi, Roberts, Sanchez, Serpa, Shallcross Smith, Shanley, Slater, Solomon, Speakman, Spears, Stewart, Tanzi, Vella-Wilkinson, Voas.

NAYS - 0:

RECUSED - 0:

By unanimous consent, the House returns to:

### **GUESTS**

Chairwoman McEntee extends heartfelt congratulations to Mark Hayward on his retirement after more than 30 years of dedicated service to the U.S. Small Business Administration- Rhode Island District, and welcomes his beloved family members, including his wife, Nancy Howard; his children, Patrick, Megan, and Kelsey; his daughter-in-law, Angela Muscatelli; and Melissa Travis, Rhode Island Society of Certified Public Accounts to the House Chamber. Speaker Shekarchi joins in welcoming them to this special occasion.

Representative Morales is delighted to extend a warm welcome and heartfelt congratulations to this year's scholarship recipients from Mount Pleasant High School. Congratulations to Valedictorian Faith Mitchell, Salutatorian Anthony Mosca, and QuestBridge Finalists Dana Cifuentes Molina and Julissa Davis and Superintendent Dr. Javier Montanez for his outstanding leadership. Speaker Shekarchi congratulates these exceptional students for their hard work and dedication, wishing them the best in their future endeavors, and welcomes them to the House Chamber.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Representative Fenton-Fung wishes House of Representatives doorman Anthony Arrico a Happy Birthday! Speaker Shekarchi wishes him a Happy Birthday!

### **GUESTS**

Chairman Solomon welcomes his former intern, Jordan Raleigh, to the House Chamber. Speaker Shekarchi welcomes her to the House Chamber.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairman Casey announces that the Committee on Municipal Government & Housing will meet today, at the rise of the House, in Room 101 of the State House.

Representative Tanzi announces that today is Equal Pay Day in the United States.

Representative Phillips extends heartfelt congratulations to Woonsocket native and University of Mississippi sophomore Tarik Robinson-O'Hagan for his historic achievement as the first Rebel to secure the men's NCAA shot put title. Robinson-O'Hagan's dedication and talent have not only brought pride to his hometown but also exemplifies the spirit of excellence in sportsmanship and athletic achievement. His accomplishment inspires us all, highlighting the importance of perseverance and dedication in pursuing one's dreams.

Speaker Pro Tempore Kennedy is pleased to announce that the House will celebrate St. Patrick's Day on Thursday, March 14, 2024. Chairwoman Fogarty will offer a St. Patrick's Day remark, Chairman McNamara will read his annual St. Patrick's Day poem, and a House Resolution will be introduced. He also reminds all members to wear green in celebration. Additionally, the House will celebrate St. Joseph's Day on Tuesday, March 19th, 2024.

Chairman Abney 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 Room 135 of the State House.

Representative Caldwell is pleased to announce that the Healthy Meals for All Coalition will gather in the Rhode Island State Library this Thursday, March 14, 2024. The coalition aims to create healthy school meals for all Rhode Island students. All interested members are welcome to attend this event.

On behalf of Chairman Abney, Representative Carson invites all members to join them for the annual Newport St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 16, 2024.

Majority Leader Blazejewski announces that the next House session will be held this Thursday, March 14, 2024.

**IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION****House Resolution No. 8051**

**BY** Shallcross Smith, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Ajello, Handy, O'Brien, McGaw, Baginski, Alzate

**ENTITLED**, HOUSE RESOLUTION CELEBRATING MARCH OF 2024, AS "NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND {LC5453/1}

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

There is no objection.

Representative Shallcross Smith discusses the resolution.

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

**House Resolution No. 8052**

**BY** Morales, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Place, Hull, Kennedy, Tanzi, Ajello, Edwards, Bennett  
**ENTITLED**, HOUSE RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING THE ACADEMIC  
ACHIEVEMENTS OF FAITH MITCHELL, ANTHONY MOSCA, DANA CIFUENTES MOLINA,  
AND JULISSA DAVIS {LC5685/1}

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

There is no objection.

Representative Morales and Speaker Shekarchi discuss the resolution.

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

**House Resolution No. 8053**

**BY** Shanley, Tanzi, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Place, Kennedy, O'Brien, Batista, Fogarty, McEntee  
**ENTITLED**, HOUSE RESOLUTION EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES ON THE PASSING OF  
THE HONORABLE DEBORAH J. KELSO {LC5692/1}

With the agreement of the majority and the minority, Chairman Shanley requests unanimous consent for immediate consideration.

There is no objection.

Chairman Shanley and Representative Tanzi discuss the resolution. Speaker Shekarchi extends his condolences to the entire Kelso family.

Read and passed, on a motion of Chairman Shanley, seconded by many others, by unanimous consent, on a rising vote.

**House Resolution No. 8054**

**BY** McEntee, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, Chippendale, Fenton-Fung, Shallcross Smith, Cortvriend,  
Costantino, Lima, Phillips  
**ENTITLED**, HOUSE RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING MARK HAYWARD ON THE OCCASION  
OF HIS RETIREMENT AS RHODE ISLAND DIRECTOR FOR THE US SMALL BUSINESS  
ADMINISTRATION {LC4008/1}

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

There is no objection.

Chairwoman McEntee, Representative Phillips, and Speaker Shekarchi discuss the resolution.

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

### **RULE 7D**

**The following bills were received pursuant to Rule 7D:**

Representative Cardillo-An Act relating to Insurance-Accident and Sickness Policies  
Representative Cortvriend-An Act relating to Health and Safety-Hazardous Waste Management  
Representative DeSimone-An Act relating to Taxation-Property Subject to Taxation,  
An Act relating to Businesses and Professions-Psychologists  
Representative Fogarty-An Act relating to Insurance-Accident and Sickness Policies  
Representative McGaw-An Act relating to Insurance-Accident and Sickness Policies  
Representative Solomon-An Act relating to Public Property and Works  
Representative Tanzi-An Act relating to Health and Safety,  
An Act relating to State Affairs and Government,  
An Act relating to State Affairs and Government

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.

**NEW BUSINESS****House Bill No. 8055**

(Secretary of State)

**BY** Voas, Giraldo, Stewart, Solomon, Casimiro, Kazarian

**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO CORPORATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, AND PARTNERSHIPS -- RHODE ISLAND BUSINESS CORPORATION ACT (Allows the sharing of certain information between the division of taxation and the secretary of state's office regarding an entity's tax status as compliant or non-compliant.) {LC5639/1}

03/13/2024 Introduced, referred to House Corporations

**House Bill No. 8056**

**BY** Hull, Lombardi J, Slater, Biah, Bennett, Tanzi, Felix, McGaw

**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO INSURANCE -- ACCIDENT AND SICKNESS INSURANCE POLICIES (Prohibits insurance companys from paying a rate that is less than the approved Medicaid rate set by the executive office of health and human services.) {LC5677/1}

03/13/2024 Introduced, referred to House Corporations

**House Bill No. 8057**

**BY** Slater

**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- SALES AND USE TAXES -- LIABILITY AND COMPUTATION (Removes the exemption from the state hotel tax for residences rented in their entirety. Effective 1/1/2025.) {LC5456/1}

03/13/2024 Introduced, referred to House Finance

**House Bill No. 8058**

**BY** Baginski, DeSimone, Slater

**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO PROPERTY -- RESIDENTIAL LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT (Prohibits use of algorithm or artificial intelligence to set residential rental amounts and prohibits landlord price fixing of residential rents. Violations constitute a deceptive trade practice and violators are subject to civil suit.) {LC5669/1}

03/13/2024 Introduced, referred to House Judiciary

**House Bill No. 8059**

**BY** Baginski

**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- RHODE ISLAND NONCOMPETITION AGREEMENT ACT (Prohibits noncompete agreements except for noncompete agreements between a seller and buyer of a business; creates civil action for an employer for the violation of an agreement by employee regarding disclosure or wrongful utilization of trade secrets.) {LC5670/1}

03/13/2024 Introduced, referred to House Labor

**House Bill No. 8060****BY** Kennedy, Cotter, Azzinaro**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO ANIMALS AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY -- DOGS (Permits the town council of the town of Hopkinton to enact ordinances which increase the fines pertaining to the violation of any dog ordinance.) {LC5501/1}

03/13/2024 Introduced, referred to House Municipal Government &amp; Housing

**House Bill No. 8061****BY** Alzate, Giraldo, Voas**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- CITY HOUSING AUTHORITIES (Establishes the composition of the housing authority for the city of Central Falls.) {LC5687/1}

03/13/2024 Introduced, referred to House Municipal Government &amp; Housing

**House Bill No. 8062****BY** Cotter, Casimiro**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO THE EXETER - WEST GREENWICH SCHOOL DISTRICT (Amends chapter 80 of the public laws of 1965 with respect to the composition of the regional district school building committee, apportionment of construction and operating costs and amendments to the agreement.) {LC5683/1}

03/13/2024 Introduced, referred to House Municipal Government &amp; Housing

**House Resolution No. 8063****BY** Noret, Serpa, Shekarchi, Nardone, Roberts, Vella-Wilkinson, Shanley, Bennett, Edwards**ENTITLED**, JOINT RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CONTINUED FOCUS AND ACTIONS FOR MAINTAINING AND IMPROVING ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES BY THE RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY IN WEST WARWICK (Would direct the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority to revisit the issue of providing transit services to the town of West Warwick and surrounding communities.) {LC5673/1}

03/13/2024 Introduced, referred to House State Government &amp; Elections

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 4:58 o'clock P.M. on motion of Representative Shanley, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Deborah J. Kelso; on motion of Representative McNamara, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Timothy "Timmy" J. Chant; on motion of Representative Shallcross Smith, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Geraldine Carlin; on motion of Representative Brien, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Ron St. Pierre; on motion of Representative Fellela, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Kenneth Jordan; on motion of Representative Kazarian, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Christin Lynch; on motion of Representative Slater, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Nicole Rene Pope; on motion of Representative Azzinaro, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of Ian Wellington MacKay, on motion of Representative Vella-Wilkinson, and as a further mark of respect to the memory of John McGonagle seconded by Majority Leader Blazejewski and Minority Whip Place the House adjourns, on a unanimous rising vote.

**Diane M. DePina**  
**Recording Clerk**

**APPENDIX**

**INVOCATION**

**REPRESENTATIVE MARY ANN SHALLCROSS SMITH**

Bless us Lord as we gather today for this session. Guide us as we work to resolve issues important to our constituents. Remind us that we best serve you by serving others. Amen

**APPENDIX**

**CALENDAR**

**IN ORDER FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 14, 2024:**

**1. 2024-H 7321**

**BY Carson**

**ENTITLED**, AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- CITY OF NEWPORT -- ELECTRIC BICYCLES AND SCOOTERS

Committee on Municipal Government & Housing recommends passage.

**2. 2024-S 2091**

**BY Valverde**

**ENTITLED**, AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE TOWN OF SOUTH KINGSTOWN TO ISSUE NOT TO EXCEED \$150,000,000 GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS AND NOTES TO FINANCE THE ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION, IMPROVEMENT, RENOVATION, FURNISHING AND EQUIPPING OF A NEW HIGH SCHOOL, ATHLETIC FACILITY, AND OTHER SCHOOL FACILITIES IN THE TOWN AND ALL EXPENSES INCIDENT THERETO, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, COSTS OF DESIGN, DEMOLITION, ATHLETIC FIELDS, LANDSCAPING AND PARKING AND ALL ATTENDANT EXPENSES, INCLUDING ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURAL AND OTHER PROJECT-RELATED CONSULTING COSTS

Committee on Finance recommends passage in concurrence.

**IN ORDER FOR TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2024:**

**1. 2024-H 7278**

**BY Baginski**

**ENTITLED**, AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF CRANSTON TO ISSUE NOT TO EXCEED \$40,000,000 GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS, NOTES AND OTHER EVIDENCES OF INDEBTEDNESS TO FINANCE THE PURCHASE AND/OR ACQUISITION OF LAND AND BUILDINGS, CONSTRUCTION, RENOVATION, IMPROVEMENT, ALTERATION, REPAIR, LANDSCAPING, FURNISHING AND/OR EQUIPPING OF SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL FACILITIES THROUGHOUT THE CITY, SUBJECT TO APPROVAL OF STATE HOUSING AID AT A REIMBURSEMENT RATE OR STATE SHARE RATIO OF NOT LESS THAN 50% AT THE TIME OF ISSUANCE

Committee on Finance recommends passage.

**Francis McCabe**  
Clerk of the House

**Thursday, March 7, 2024**