

June 5, 2026

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>



- **2027 state budget advances**

After passage by the House Finance Committee last week, the House was set to consider the 2027 state budget bill Friday afternoon. The legislation ([2026-H 7127A](#)) provides economic relief for Rhode Islanders, strengthens support for education and the state's hospitals and health care providers and establishes new government reform efforts without any broad-based tax or fee increases.

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- **Senate passes McKenney bill to revive claims springing from childhood sex abuse**

The Senate passed legislation ([2026-S 2616A](#)) introduced by Sen. Mark McKenney (D-Dist. 30, Warwick) that would revive previously time-barred civil claims arising from childhood sexual abuse. The legislation was amended to address concerns raised over the course of the committee process. The measure now moves to the House of Representatives, which has already passed the original version of the bill ([2026-H 7200](#)) introduced by Rep. Carol Hagan McEntee (D-Dist. 33, South Kingstown, Narragansett), chairwoman of the House Judiciary Committee. That legislation was also amended by the Senate and moves back to the House for consideration.

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- **Assembly approves bill limiting fees on school meals**

The General Assembly gave its final approval to legislation sponsored by Senate President Valarie J. Lawson (D-Dist. 14, East Providence) and Rep. Justine Caldwell (D-Dist. 30, East Greenwich, West Greenwich) to limit transaction and processing fees for school meals. The bill ([2026-S 2635](#), [2026-H 8129](#)) now heads to the

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governor.

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- **General Assembly passes Kennedy, Lawson bill to make deed theft a felony**
 The General Assembly passed legislation ([2026-H 7551aa](#), [2026-S 2715A](#)) introduced by House Speaker Pro Tempore Brian Patrick Kennedy (D-Dist. 38, Hopkinton, Westerly) and Senate President Valarie J. Lawson (D-Dist. 14, East Providence) that would criminalize deed theft — an increasingly common practice that bold scammers use to actually steal homes and real estate. The measure now moves to the governor’s office.
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- **Assembly OKs Tikoian, Noret bill for cardiac emergency response in schools**
 The General Assembly has passed legislation ([2026-S 2079](#), [2026-H 7027](#)) introduced by Senate Majority Whip David P. Tikoian (D-Dist. 22, Smithfield, Lincoln, North Providence) and Rep. Thomas E. Noret (D-Dist. 25, Coventry, West Warwick) that would expand the requirement of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in schools while establishing and implementing a cardiac emergency response (CERP) plan. The measure now moves to the governor’s office.
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- **House OKs Fogarty bill to let state enter international public health collaboration**
 The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2026-H 8365A](#)) sponsored by Rep. Kathleen A. Fogarty (D-Dist. 35, South Kingstown) that would authorize the Department of Health to participate in international public health collaboration networks. The measure now moves to the Senate for consideration.
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- **Senate OKs Ciccone bills to ensure constitutional rights of residents upheld**
 The Senate approved two bills sponsored by Majority Leader Frank A. Ciccone III (D-Dist. 7, Providence, Johnston) that ensure federal officers operating in Rhode Island comply with the rights and protections guaranteed by the United States Constitution. The first bill ([2026-S 2605](#)) would allow Rhode Island residents to file civil lawsuits in state court against federal officials who, while acting under federal authority, violate their constitutional rights. The second bill ([2026-S 3116](#)) reinforces that immigration enforcement is primarily a federal responsibility. The bills now head to the House for consideration, where Rep. Brandon Potter (D-Dist. 16, Cranston) has introduced one bill ([2026-H 7202](#)) and Rep. John J. Lombardi (D-Dist. 8, Providence) has introduced the other piece of legislation ([2026-H 8347](#)).
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- **Senate passes Ciccone bills that would protect utility consumers**
 The Senate passed three bills sponsored by Majority Leader Frank A. Ciccone III (D-Dist. 7, Providence, Johnston) that would protect and offer billing transparency to utility consumers in Rhode Island. The first ([2026-S 2074A](#)) would make electrical bills easier to understand by requiring that they provide a visual illustration. Rep. Enrique George Sanchez (D-Dist. 9, Providence) has the House bill ([2026-H 7885](#)). The second ([2026-S 2429](#)) would require all public utilities to maintain a customer service facility within the state to address customer inquiries and accept bill

payments. Rep. Raymond A. Hull (D-Dist. 6, Providence, North Providence) has the House bill ([2026-H 7332](#)). The third ([2026-S 3125A](#)) would require every gas distribution company to include certain information on any bill or statement provided to the consumer. The bills now head to the House for consideration.
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- **House, Senate OK Solomon, Britto repeal of support of pro-slavery amendment**
The House and Senate both gave their approval to a resolution ([2026-H 7579](#), [2026-S 3264](#)) sponsored by Rep. Joseph J. Solomon Jr. (D-Dist. 22, Warwick) and Sen. Robert Britto (D-Dist. 18, East Providence, Pawtucket) to reverse the General Assembly's ratification of a pro-slavery constitutional amendment from 1861.
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- **Senate OKs Lawson resolution funding Eat Well, Be Well program**
The Senate voted to approve a resolution ([2026-S 3282](#)) from President Valarie J. Lawson (D-Dist. 14, East Providence) to fund a program that provides Rhode Island Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients with additional benefits when they buy fruits and vegetables. The funding is included in the proposed House budget ([2026-H 7127A](#)).
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