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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>



- **Shekarchi re-elected Speaker; lists housing, homelessness as top priorities**
Speaker of the House K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) was re-elected to lead the House of Representatives as the 2023-2024 term began. He outlined a legislative agenda topped by addressing the state's affordable housing and homelessness crises, and pledged to continue fostering a collaborative spirit in the House and state government, to spend state resources prudently and to renew the push to make Rhode Island a hub for bioscience and green industries.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate President Ruggerio re-elected; lays out legislative priorities for 2023**
Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) was once again chosen to preside over the Senate for its 2023 legislative session, laying out the agenda for the year including ensuring a quality education for every student, ensuring every Rhode Islander can access health care, ensuring that children inherit a cleaner, more resilient environment, ensuring that small businesses can create jobs and thrive, continuing to strengthen and expand early childhood care and education, reviewing the education funding formula, addressing the mental health crisis, taking action to replace all of Rhode Island's lead pipes, continuing to ensure that all Rhode Islanders have access to safe and affordable housing.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Whip Kazarian introduces Equality in Abortion Coverage Act**
House Majority Whip Katherine S. Kazarian (D-Dist. 63, East Providence) has introduced the Equality in Abortion Coverage Act. The legislation would ensure that

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individuals on Medicaid and state health insurance plans have coverage for abortion procedures. The bill would add Rhode Island to the ranks of 16 states, including Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont and Maine, whose Medicaid programs cover abortion.

[Click here to see news release](#)

- **Sen. Acosta and Rep. Felix elected co-chairs of R.I. Black and Latino Caucus**
Sen. Jonathon Acosta (D-Dist. 16, Central Falls, Pawtucket) and Rep. Leonela Felix (D-Dist. 61, Pawtucket) have been elected as the co-chairs of the Rhode Island Legislative Black and Latino Caucus by their fellow caucus members. The previous chair was Rep. Karen Alzate (D-Dist. 60, Pawtucket).
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **General Assembly honors late Gov. Lincoln C. Almond**
The House and the Senate honored former Gov. Lincoln C. Almond, who passed away Jan. 2 at age 86. Almond, a Republican, served as governor from 1995 to 2003. He championed public education at all levels and is remembered by lawmakers for working with them in a bipartisan fashion.
[Click here to see resolution.](#)