

March 19, 2021

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>



- **Act on Climate wins approval in Senate, House Environment Committee**  
Both the full Senate and the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee approved the Act on Climate, which updates the state's climate-emission reduction goals and makes them enforceable, resulting in net-zero carbon emissions from Rhode Island's entire economy by 2050. The full House is expected to vote next week on its bill. The bills ([2021-S 0078A](#), [2021-H 5445A](#)) are sponsored by Senate Environment and Agriculture Chairwoman Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) and Rep. Lauren H. Carson (D-Dist. 75, Newport).  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate approves Coyne bill to let senior volunteers earn property tax credit**  
The Senate approved a bill ([2021-S 0103](#)) sponsored by Sen. Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) authorizing cities and towns to establish programs to offer tax credits of up to \$1,500 to property owners age 60 and over in exchange for volunteering for the municipality. The bill now goes to the House.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate OKs bill to let pregnant women above income limit buy Medicaid**  
The Senate approved the Healthy Pregnancy Program ([2021-S 0231](#)), sponsored by Sen. Gayle L. Goldin (D-Dist. 3, Providence) to allow pregnant women with an annual family income above the applicable Medicaid income limit, but less than or equal to four times the federal poverty level, to purchase health insurance coverage through one of the Medicaid managed care plans. The bill now goes to the House.

More...

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- **Bill would ensure all children have health care regardless of immigration status**  
Legislation sponsored by Rep. David Morales (D-Dist. 7, Providence) and Sen. Sandra Cano (D-Dist. 8, Pawtucket) would make health insurance available to all children in need who are residents of the state, regardless of immigration status. The legislation ([2021-H 5714](#), [2021-S 0576](#)) would provide for the appropriation of state-only funds to pay for coverage if federal funds are not available.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House OKs McNamara bill to allow schools to raise funds for field trips**  
The House of Representatives passed legislation introduced by Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) that would allow school districts to raise the money necessary to fund field trips. The legislation ([2021-H 5079](#)) would allow a school district to request or accept a donation from a student or the student's parent or legal guardian, in whole or in part, for the cost of district-sponsored field trips, provided that the district would pay the costs to meet any deficit that may remain after efforts to raise funds have concluded.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House approves Fellela bill to publicize mutual consent adoption registry**  
The House of Representatives gave its approval to legislation introduced by Rep. Deborah A. Fellela (D-Dist. 43, Johnston) that would make it easier for adopted adult children and their birth parents and siblings to find each other through mutual consent. The bill ([2021-H 5092](#)) would direct the Department of Health to provide information regarding the passive voluntary adoption reunion registry on the Department of Health's website and in the Division of Vital Records.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **President Ruggiero, Rep. Ruggiero sponsor bills for 100% renewable electricity**  
Separate bills ([2021-S 0629](#), [2021-H 5762](#)) introduced by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggiero (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) and Rep. Deborah Ruggiero (D-Dist. 74, Jamestown, Middletown) would require that 100 percent of Rhode Island's electricity sold at retail comes from renewable sources by 2030.  
[Click here to see Senate news release.](#)  
[Click here to see House news release.](#)
- **Vella-Wilkinson bill would mandate coverage for Lyme, uterine fibroids**  
The House Committee on Corporations heard testimony this week on legislation introduced by Rep. Camille F.J. Vella-Wilkinson (D-Dist. 21, Warwick) that would provide health care coverage for treatments for Lyme disease and uterine fibroids. The first bill ([2021-H 5897](#)) would require insurers to provide coverage for any prescription drug treatment for Lyme disease. The second bill ([2021-H 5898](#)) provides health care coverage for laparoscopic removal of uterine fibroids, including intraoperative ultrasound guidance and monitoring and radiofrequency ablation.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Barros resolution asks for municipal COVID funds oversight commissions**

Rep. Jean Philippe Barros (D-Dist. 59, Pawtucket) has introduced a resolution ([2021-H 6125](#)) which would ask Rhode Island's municipalities to create five-member commissions to oversee the distribution of anticipated federal COVID-19 funds. The purpose of the commissions would be to ensure that the money received by municipalities is administered wisely, fairly, honestly and with transparency. [Click here to see news release.](#)

▪ **House Judiciary Committee begins hearing firearm bills**

On Friday afternoon, the House Judiciary Committee, chaired by Rep. Robert E. Craven (D-Dist. 32, North Kingstown), began hearing several bills relating to firearms. Legislation to ban firearms on school grounds, ban assault weapons, and to allow conceal and carry permit reciprocity with other states are among the bills to be heard during the meeting. In total, the meeting, held virtually due to COVID-19 precautions, features testimony on 21 different bills relating to firearms.

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