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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>



- **Senate passes bill to reduce barriers to substance abuse treatment**
The Senate passed legislation ([2022-S 2078A](#)) sponsored by Sen. Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) that would help ensure that patients discharged from hospitals with mental health disorders, including substance abuse disorders, are discharged into the appropriate inpatient or outpatient setting quickly and efficiently, and would require that health plans cover residential or inpatient behavioral health treatment and prohibit prior authorization requirements for such treatment. The measure now moves to the House, where similar legislation ([2022-H 7078](#)) has been introduced by Rep. John G. Edwards (D-Dist. 70, Tiverton, Portsmouth). [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate OKs bill to create pilot program tapping Medicaid to house the homeless**
The Senate passed legislation ([2022-S 2079A](#)) sponsored by Sen. Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) to launch a pilot program testing the effectiveness of using Medicaid waiver funds to treat chronic homelessness. The bill will now be forwarded to the House of Representatives, where Rep. David A. Bennett (D-Dist. 20, Warwick, Cranston) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2022-H 7181](#)). [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House passes Casimiro bill requiring childhood cancer data collection**
The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2022-H 7134A](#)) introduced by Rep. Julie A. Casimiro (D-Dist. 31, North Kingstown, Exeter) that would require collecting data on childhood cancer in the state. The bill now heads to the Senate for consideration, where Sen. Alana M. DiMario (D-Dist. 36, Narragansett, North Kingstown) has introduced similar legislation ([2022-S 2074](#)).

More...

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- **House OKs Bennett bill to let PAs evaluate student athletes' injuries**
The House of Representatives approved legislation ([2022-H 7299](#)) sponsored by Rep. David A. Bennett (D-Dist. 20, Warwick, Cranston) allowing physician's assistants, as well as certified registered nurse practitioners, to evaluate youth who are removed from athletic play under the School and Youth Concussion Act. The bill now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Bridget Valverde (D-Dist. 35, North Kingstown, East Greenwich, Narragansett, South Kingstown) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2022-S 2607](#)).
[Click here to see news release](#)

- **Senate supports renaming CCRI's Newport campus in honor of Paiva Weed**
The Rhode Island Senate approved legislation to rename the Community College of Rhode Island's Newport campus in honor of former Senate President M. Teresa Paiva Weed. Senate Majority Whip Maryellen Goodwin (D-Dist. 1, Providence) introduced the legislation ([2022-S 2832](#)). The bill now heads to the House of Representatives for consideration, where Rep. Marvin L. Abney (D-Dist. 73, Newport, Middletown) has introduced the bill ([2022-H 8141](#)).
[Click here to see news release](#)

- **Rep. Cardillo introduces legislation that would remove fee for new license plates**
Rep. Edward T. Cardillo Jr. (D-Dist. 42, Johnston, Cranston) introduced legislation ([2022-H 8118](#)) that would remove an \$8 fee for vehicle owners that acquire a newly redesigned license plate. Motorists will be required to replace their current plates for when they renew their registrations with the Division of Motor Vehicles within the next two years. The rollout is expected to begin this summer.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **\$4.8M in grants will expand outdoor activities throughout Rhode Island**
Senate President Dominick Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) and Speaker of the House K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) announced approximately \$4.8 million in awards that will enable eligible small businesses to expand their capacity to do business outdoors. Funded through the Rhode Island Rebounds initiative, the Take It Outside program will fund 21 intermediary organizations to support outdoor activities for small businesses.
[Click here to see news release.](#)