

May 13, 2022

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>



- **House passes legislation from Speaker Shekarchi housing package**
The House of Representatives approved legislation sponsored by Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) that is part of his 11-bill housing package introduced earlier this year. The bill ([2022-H 7941](#)) would permit multi-family rental apartment units to be built as part of a comprehensive plan and to be included in the calculation of low- or moderate-income housing. It also requires that at least 30 percent of the units created are deed restricted for households earning not more than 60 percent of AMI. The bill now heads to the Senate for consideration.
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- **Senate approves ‘stolen valor’ bill**
The Senate approved legislation ([2022-S 2425A](#)) sponsored by Sen. Roger A. Picard (D-Dist. 20, Woonsocket, Cumberland) to allow prosecution of those who falsely represent themselves as a member of the military or a veteran for personal benefit. The bill now heads to the House, which last week passed similar legislation ([2022-H 7714A](#)) sponsored by Rep. Samuel A. Azzinaro (D-Dist. 37, Westerly).
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- **House passes Amore bill that protects victims of domestic abuse**
The House passed legislation sponsored by Rep. Gregg Amore (D-Dist. 65, East Providence) that will help protect victims of domestic violence by keeping their addresses confidential. The bill ([2022-H 8015](#)) would establish the Address Confidentiality Program, which would enable a victim of domestic violence to apply to the Secretary of State to have an address designated by the Secretary to serve as the person’s substitute address. The bill now heads to the Senate, where Sen. Dawn Euer

More...

(D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) has introduced companion legislation ([2022-S 2659](#)).

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▪ **Senate passes DiPalma bills that reform state purchasing processes**

The Senate passed two bills sponsored by Sen. Louis P. DiPalma (D-Dist. 12, Middletown, Little Compton, Newport, Tiverton) that would reform the state's purchasing policies and processes. The first bill ([2022-S 2586A](#)) would require that no request for proposal shall change to a master-price agreement unless the request for proposal is cancelled and reissued as a master price agreement. The second bill ([2022-S 2601](#)) would establish requirements with respect to requests for proposals submitted to the chief purchasing officer for review and ensure that there are no conflicts of interest. The bills now head to the House of Representatives, where Rep. Patricia A. Serpa (D-Dist. 27, West Warwick, Coventry, Warwick) has introduced similar legislation ([2022-H 8101](#), [2022-H 8102](#)).

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▪ **House votes to repeal bill allowing subminimum wages for disabled workers**

The House of Representatives voted to repeal a law that allows employers to pay workers with disabilities below the minimum wage. The legislation ([2022-H 7511](#)), sponsored by House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick), eliminates a practice that resulted in a federal Department of Justice lawsuit against Rhode Island over the rights of intellectually or developmentally disabled Rhode Islanders. The measure now heads to the Senate, where Sen. John P. Burke (D-Dist. 9, West Warwick) has introduced companion legislation ([2022-S 2242](#)).

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▪ **House OKs bill lowering elder exploitation age**

The House of Representatives approved legislation ([2022-H 7246](#)) sponsored by Rep. Jason Knight (D-Dist. 67, Barrington, Warren) to lower the age at which a victim can be considered an elder under the state's elder exploitation law from 65 to 60. The bill now goes to the Senate, which has already passed matching legislation ([2022-S2228](#)) sponsored by Sen. Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence).

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▪ **House passes Noret legislation to collect data on Section 8 housing vouchers**

The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2022-H 7946](#)) introduced by Rep. Thomas E. Noret (D-Dist. 25, Coventry, West Warwick) that helps address the state's housing crisis by requiring the Rhode Island Housing Corporation to maintain records on the number of Section 8 Housing Choice vouchers which are received and utilized by each municipality, housing authority and agency. The measure now moves to the Senate for consideration.

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▪ **House OKs Fellela bill changing name of legislation to Ryan's Law**

The House of Representatives gave its approval to legislation ([2022-H 7157](#)) introduced by Rep. Deborah A. Fellela (D-Dist. 43, Johnston) that would name a law passed last year after the young man whose death precipitated it. Last year the

General Assembly passed a law that increased the maximum fine amount for those found guilty of unprofessional conduct from \$10,000 to \$30,000. The bill would officially designate the act as “Ryan’s Law” in memory of Ryan Maseemino, who died after being overprescribed. The measure now moves to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2022-S 2406](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Joshua Miller (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence).

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▪ **Rep. Diaz, Sen. DiMario host virtual Child Care Awareness Day**

Rep. Grace Diaz (D-Dist. 11, Providence) and Sen. Alana DiMario (D-Dist. 36, North Kingstown, Narragansett), co-chairwomen of the Permanent Legislative Commission on Child Care, celebrated Child Care Awareness and Early Care and Education Advocacy Day with a virtual Zoom program. The child care stakeholders gathered to push for policies and funding that address the challenges faced by parents of young children during the COVID-19 crisis and beyond, including the need to have adequate child care that is healthy, safe and high quality.

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