

May 17, 2024

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 OKs Fogarty bill that would felonize third domestic violence charge**  
The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2024-H 7744](#)) introduced by Rep. Kathleen A. Fogarty (D-Dist. 35, South Kingstown) that would punish a perpetrator's third domestic violence violation as a felony. The measure now moves to the Senate, where similar legislation ([2024-S 2932](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown).  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House OKs bill for mixed-use, multifamily housing in local zoning ordinances**  
The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2024-H 7981Aaa](#)) introduced by Rep. Joshua J. Giraldo (D-Dist. 56, Central Falls) that aims to increase the housing supply by requiring municipalities to allow for duplexes, mixed-use development and multifamily housing in certain areas of each municipality. The bill is part of a 15-bill package of legislation regarding housing issues that Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi announced in March. The measure now moves to the Senate for consideration.  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate OKs bill that would make it illegal to charge seniors for paper invoices**  
The Senate passed legislation ([2024-S 2278A](#)) introduced by Sen. Matthew L. LaMountain that would make it illegal to charge fees to senior citizens for paper invoices. The violation of this provision would be a deceptive trade practice subject to a \$500 fine. The measure now moves to the House, where Rep. Brandon T. Voas (D-Dist. 57, Cumberland, Central Falls) has introduced similar legislation ([2024-H 7940](#)).  
[Click here to see news release.](#)

More...

- **Senate passes Felag bill to allow breweries to sell 1/6th kegs to public**  
The Senate approved legislation ([2024-S 2695](#)) sponsored by Sen. Walter S. Felag (D-Dist. 10, Warren, Bristol, Tiverton) that would allow for the holder of a manufacturer’s license to sell one one-sixth barrel keg of malt beverage produced on the premises per day to consumers. The bill now heads to the House, where Rep. Carol Hagan McEntee (D-Dist. 33, South Kingstown, Narragansett) introduced the legislation ([2024-H 7842](#)).  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House passes Marszalkowski bill that exempts court fees for crime victims**  
The House of Representatives passed legislation ([2024-H 7800](#)) sponsored by Rep. Alex D. Marszalkowski (D-Dist. 52, Cumberland) that would exempt crime victims seeking restitution from having to pay certain court fees. The bill would waive the payment of filing fees and service of process costs when the victim of a crime is still owed restitution at the expiration of a criminal case. The legislation now heads to the Senate, where Sen. Melissa A. Murray (D-Dist. 24, Woonsocket, North Smithfield) has introduced the bill ([2024-S 2115A](#)).  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate OKs ballot measure for ‘equitable, adequate and meaningful’ education**  
The Senate passed legislation ([2024-S 2147](#)) sponsored by Sen. Roger A. Picard (D-Dist. 20, Woonsocket, Cumberland) to place a question on the next statewide ballot asking voters to amend the state constitution with a legally enforceable guarantee of “an equitable, adequate and meaningful education to each child.” The legislation now goes to the House, where Rep. Mary Duffy Messier (D-Dist. 62, Pawtucket) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2024-H 7396](#)).  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **House approves Cortvriend bill to preserve public rights of way**  
The House approved legislation ([2024-H 7645A](#)) sponsored by Rep. Terri Cortvriend (D-Dist. 72, Portsmouth, Middletown) to enable cities and towns to affordably preserve public access paths and trails through “qualified abandonment,” a designation that allows municipalities to abandon roads or paths they no longer wish to maintain, but with easements that maintain the public’s access rights. The bill now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Victoria Gu (D-Dist. 38, Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2024-S 2641](#)).  
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate approves Gallo bills for universal pre-K, limits on K-2 class size**  
The Senate approved two bills sponsored by Senate President Pro Tempore Hanna M. Gallo (D-Dist. 27, Cranston, West Warwick) to set Rhode Island on a path to offering universal free prekindergarten to 3- and 4-year-olds and expanding child care access for younger children ([2024-S 2843](#)), and setting a 20-student limit for kindergarten through Grade 2 classrooms in public schools ([2024-S 2148](#)). The bills now go to the House, where Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) is sponsoring the pre-K bill ([2024-H 7497](#)).  
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Senate OKs DiMario Renewable Ready bill**

The Senate passed a bill ([2024-S 2293](#)) sponsored by Sen. Alana M. DiMario (D-Dist. 36, Narragansett, North Kingstown, New Shoreham) to ensure renewable energy projects, such as solar farms, are built without increasing electric rates or clearing Rhode Island's forests. The bill now heads to the House, where Rep. June S. Speakman (D-Dist. 68, Warren, Bristol) has introduced companion legislation ([2024-H 7616](#)). [Click here to see news release.](#)

- **House approves Ackerman consumer protection bill for solar industry**

The House approved legislation ([2024-H 7603A](#)) sponsored by Deputy Majority Whip Mia A. Ackerman (D-Dist. 45, Cumberland, Lincoln) to protect consumers and ensure a healthy solar industry by regulating businesses selling home solar systems. The bill now moves to the Senate, which has already passed companion legislation ([2024-S 2801Aaa](#)) introduced by Sen. Jacob Bissaillon (D-Dist. 1, Providence). [Click here to see news release.](#)

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