

May 29, 2026

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>



- **Assembly OKs bill to allow bars to stay open during World Cup games**
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2026-H 8009A](#), [2026-S 2627A](#)) introduced by Rep. Joshua J. Giraldo (D-Dist. 56, Central Falls) and Sen. Matthew L. LaMountain (D-Dist. 31, Warwick, Cranston) that would allow local licensing authorities to grant temporary periods for extended hours for certain 2026 FIFA World Cup Tournament matches between June 11 and July 3 until up to 4 a.m. with liquor service until up to 3 a.m. The measure now moves to the governor's office. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Senate approves several bills in package of healthcare legislation**
The Senate approved several of its healthcare bills centered on supporting Rhode Islanders in crisis, protecting patients and providers and strengthening the state's health workforce. A bill ([2026-S 3058A](#)) by Sen. Melissa Murray (D-Dist. 24, Woonsocket, North Smithfield) codifies the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline in state law. A bill ([2026-S 3059A](#)) by Sen. Robert Britto (D-Dist. 18, East Providence, Pawtucket) imposes certain duties on pharmacy benefit managers. A bill ([2026-S 3061](#)) by Sen. Brian J. Thompson (D-Dist. 20, Woonsocket, Cumberland) would require insurers to provide post-acute care to discharged patients for seven days. A bill ([2026-S 3060Aaa](#)) by Sen. Peter A. Appollonio Jr. (D-Dist. 29, Warwick) requires pharmacy benefit managers to apply for a certificate of authority. A bill ([2026-S 2379A](#)) by Sen. Linda L. Ujifusa (D-Dist. 11, Portsmouth, Bristol) gives a statutory framework to ensure vaccines remain accessible and affordable. A bill ([2026-S 3065A](#)) by Sen. Alana M. DiMario (D-Dist. 36, Narragansett, North Kingstown, New Shoreham) strengthens coverage and reimbursement for mobile

More...

youth crisis response teams.

[Click here for Murray release.](#)

[Click here for Britto release.](#)

[Click here for Appollonio release.](#)

[Click here for Thompson release.](#)

[Click here for Ujifusa release.](#)

[Click here for DiMario release.](#)

- **House OKs McNamara bill requiring soft shell helmet covers for football players**

The House of Representatives approved legislation ([2026-H 7115](#)) introduced by Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) that would require soft shell helmet covers for high school football players. The measure now moves to the Senate where similar legislation ([2026-S 2213](#)) has been introduced by Sen. Matthew L. LaMountain (D-Dist. 31, Warwick, Cranston).

[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Senate approves Britto bill giving parents access to school bus GPS data**

The Senate approved legislation ([2026-S 2392A](#)) introduced by Sen. Robert Britto (D-Dist. 18, East Providence, Pawtucket) that would allow parents or guardians to have access to the GPS (global positioning system) data of the school bus used to transport their students to and from school. The measure now moves to the House of Representatives for consideration.

[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **House OKs McGaw bill allowing greener alternatives to burial, cremation**

The House approved legislation ([2026-H 7070](#)) sponsored by Rep. Michelle McGaw (D-Dist. 71, Portsmouth, Tiverton, Little Compton) to provide Rhode Islanders two additional, greener alternatives to burial or cremation: natural organic reduction — the contained, accelerated conversion of human remains to soil, performed in a disposition facility — and alkaline hydrolysis, also known as “water cremation.” The bill now goes to the Senate, where Sen. Tiara Mack (D-Dist. 6, Providence) has introduced companion legislation ([2026-S 2594](#)).

[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Senate approves Gallo bills for universal pre-K**

The Senate approved two bills sponsored by Senate Education Committee Chairwoman 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 ([2026-S 3147](#)) and to clarify that state pre-K funding can be used to support both the state-run pre-K program and Head Start ([2026-S 3077](#)). The bills now head to the House, where House Education Committee Chairman Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2026-H 8163](#)) to the pre-K expansion bill, and House Health and Human Services Committee Chairwoman Susan R. Donovan (D-Dist. 69, Bristol, Portsmouth) is sponsoring companion legislation ([2026-H 7680](#)) to the funding clarification bill.

[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Senate OKs Vargas bill to stop automatic enrollment in college health plans**

The Senate approved legislation ([2026-S 3011](#)) sponsored by Sen. Lammis J. Vargas (D-Dist. 28, Cranston, Providence) to prohibit colleges and universities from automatically enrolling all students in their health insurance plans. The bill is a consumer-protection measure designed to prevent situations in which students are unknowingly enrolled and billed for the college health plan when they already have health insurance. The measure now moves to the House of Representatives for consideration.

[Click here to see news release.](#)

▪ **Bill limiting fees on school meals advances**

The Senate and House each approved bills ([2026-S 2635](#), [2026-H 8129](#)) sponsored by Senate President Valarie J. Lawson (D-Dist. 14, East Providence) and Rep. Justine Caldwell (D-Dist. 30, East Greenwich, West Greenwich) to limit transaction and processing fees for school meals and ensure all schools offer at least one fee-free payment method. Each bill now goes to the other chamber, where it must be approved before it can be sent to the governor.

[Click here to see news release.](#)

▪ **Senate approves Lawson bill to expand paid family leave**

The Senate passed legislation ([2026-S 2737A](#)) introduced by Senate President Valarie J. Lawson (D-Dist. 14, East Providence) to expand paid family leave through Rhode Island's Temporary Caregiver Insurance (TCI) program from eight weeks to 12. The bill now goes to the House, where Rep. Joshua J. Giraldo (D-Dist. 56, Central Falls) has introduced similar legislation ([2026-H 7968](#)).

[Click here to see news release.](#)

▪ **House approves Ackerman bill to combat bullying**

The House approved legislation ([2026-H 7114A](#)) sponsored by House Deputy Majority Whip Mia A. Ackerman (D-Dist. 45, Cumberland, Lincoln) to address bullying in schools by creating a restorative justice program in which the student found to have engaged in bullying based on religion, sexual orientation or ethnicity would perform community service designed to educate them and deter future bullying. The bill now goes to the Senate for consideration.

[Click here to see news release.](#)