

June 7, 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>



- **Budget bill advances**

The 2025 state budget bill ([2024-H 7225A](#)), which was approved by the House Finance Committee May 31, is slated to come before the House for consideration June 7. The \$13.947 billion budget directs additional funding toward education and children, raises Medicaid reimbursement rates and includes a \$120 million affordable housing bond. The budget is \$60 million less than it is in the current fiscal year, reflecting an end in federal pandemic aid. Following House passage, the bill must also pass the Senate before being sent to the governor.

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- **Assembly approves bill requiring safe storage of firearms**

The General Assembly has approved legislation ([2024-S 2202aa](#), [2024-H 7373A](#)) sponsored by Rep. Justine A. Caldwell (D-Dist. 30, East Greenwich, West Greenwich) and Sen. Pamela J. Lauria (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) to require safe storage of firearms in Rhode Island. The legislation now heads to Gov. Daniel McKee, who supports the bill.

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- **General Assembly OKs LEOBOR reform legislation**

The General Assembly passed the Law Enforcement Officers' Due Process, Accountability and Transparency Act ([2024-H 7263Aaa](#), [2024-S 2096Aaa](#)) which will bring significant and long-overdue reforms to the Law Enforcement Officers' Bill of Rights (LEOBOR). The bills were introduced by Deputy Speaker Raymond A. Hull (D-Dist. 6, Providence, North Providence) and Senate President Dominick J.

More...

Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence). The legislation now heads to the governor's office.

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- **Assembly passes Ruggerio, O'Brien bill to stiffen penalties for dog abuse**
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2024-S 2744](#), [2024-H 8095](#)) sponsored by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) and Rep. William W. O'Brien (D-Dist. 54, North Providence) that would increase the penalty for violations of the care of dogs statute to a minimum fine of \$100 and a maximum fine of \$1,000 per violation. The care of dogs statute includes regulations on tethering dogs, leaving them outside and providing proper care and nutrition. The legislation now heads to the governor for consideration.
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- **Assembly OKs Casimiro, Ciccone bill protecting workers' health coverage**
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2024-H 7795B](#), [2024-S 2901B](#)) sponsored by Rep. Julie A. Casimiro (D-Dist. 31, North Kingstown, Exeter) and Sen. Frank A. Ciccone (D-Dist. 7, Providence, Johnston) that prohibits contractors and subcontractors from paying employees the cash equivalent of any applicable health care benefit in lieu of actually purchasing the health care benefit. The legislation now heads to the governor for consideration.
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- **Assembly OKs bill banning noncompete clauses for nurse practitioners**
The General Assembly has approved legislation ([2024-S 2220](#), [2024-H 7696](#)) sponsored by Sen. Pamela J. Lauria (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) and Rep. June S. Speakman (D-Dist. 68, Warren, Bristol) to prohibit noncompete clauses in employment contracts for nurse practitioners. The legislation, which now goes to the governor's desk, gives nurse practitioners a protection that physicians have and is intended to address a factor contributing to the state's shortage of primary care providers.
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- **General Assembly OKs bill to create 'Blue Envelope Program'**
The General Assembly approved legislation from Rep. Samuel A. Azzinaro (D-Dist. 37, Westerly) and Sen. Victoria Gu (D-Dist. 38, Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown) to create a voluntary "Blue Envelope Program" for drivers with autism to improve communication between them and law enforcement during traffic stops. The legislation ([2024-H 7040A](#), [2024-S 2481A](#)) now heads to the governor's desk.
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- **Assembly approves bill to educate buyers of shoreline property of right to access**
The General Assembly has approved legislation from Sen. Victoria Gu (D-Dist. 38, Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown) and Rep. Terri Cortvriend (D-Dist. 72, Portsmouth, Middletown) to improve disclosure of shoreline access rights and related conditions during the sale of oceanfront property. The legislation ([2024-S 2185A](#), [2024-H 7376A](#)) now heads to the governor's desk for his signature.
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- **General Assembly approves e-bike bill**

The General Assembly voted to approve legislation from Rep. Jennifer Boylan (D-Dist. 66, Barrington, East Providence) and Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) to expand the legal use of electric bicycles in Rhode Island by modernizing their classification and regulation. The legislation ([2024-H 7713A](#), [2024-S 2829A](#)) now heads to the governor's desk.
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- **Assembly approves consumer protection bill for solar industry**

The General Assembly approved legislation sponsored by House Deputy Majority Whip Mia A. Ackerman and Sen. Jacob Bissailon to protect consumers and ensure a healthy solar industry by regulating businesses selling home solar systems. The legislation ([2024-H 7603A](#), [2024-S 2801Aaa](#)) now goes to the governor's desk for his consideration.
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