

June 14, 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>



- **General Assembly enacts 2025 state budget bill**

The General Assembly approved the 2025 state budget bill ([2024-H 7225Aaa](#)). 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 measure now moves to the governor's office.

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- **Bill requiring safe storage of firearms is signed into law**

Gov. Dan McKee signed 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.

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- **LEOBOR reform legislation becomes law with governor's signature**

Gov. Dan McKee signed 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 law was introduced by Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, North Providence, Providence) and Deputy House Speaker Raymond A. Hull (D-Dist. 6, Providence, North Providence).

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More...

- **General Assembly approves ADU legislation, other bills to ease housing crisis**  
Legislators approved and sent to the governor several bills included in the legislative package put forth by Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi (D-Dist. 23, Warwick) to address the state's housing crisis, including the bill to make it easier for homeowners to build accessory dwelling units (ADUs), also known as in-law apartments and granny flats, on their property. The ADU legislation ([2024-H 7062A](#), [2024-S 2998A](#)) is sponsored by House Commission on Housing Affordability Chairwoman June S. Speakman (D-Dist. 68, Warren, Bristol) and Sen. Victoria Gu (D-Dist. 38, Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown). The bills are headed to the governor.  
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- **HEALTH Initiative bills headed to governor's desk**  
Several bills that were included in the Senate leadership's HEALTH (Holistic Enhancement and Access Legislation for Total Health) initiative cleared the General Assembly, including bills to join five interstate licensing compacts to make it easier for Rhode Islanders to access the care they need. Two bills sponsored by Sen. Pamela J. Lauria (D-Dist. 32, Barrington, Bristol, East Providence) aimed at addressing the primary care provider shortage by encouraging new providers to choose a career in primary care in Rhode Island were included in the 2025 state budget.  
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- **Lawmakers OK bill for automatic disaffiliation of independent primary voters**  
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2024-H 7662](#), [2024-S 2894](#)) introduced by Rep. Patricia A. Serpa (D-Dist. 27, West Warwick, Coventry) and Sen. Leonidas P. Raptakis (D-Dist. 33, Coventry, West Greenwich) making party disaffiliation automatic for registered independent voters who vote in primaries. Current law affiliates independents who vote in a party primary with that party unless they fill out a disaffiliation form after casting their vote. The bill goes to the governor.  
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- **General Assembly approves Edwards, Euer Healthcare Provider Shield Act**  
The General Assembly approved the Healthcare Provider Shield Act ([2024-S 2262A](#), [2024-H 7577](#)) introduced by Rep. John G. Edwards (D-Dist. 70, Tiverton) and Sen. Dawn Euer (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) to protect medical providers who provide transgender and reproductive health care services in Rhode Island from civil or criminal suits from other states or their residents. The measure now moves to the governor's office.  
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- **Assembly OKs Renewable Ready bill**  
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2024-S 2293A](#), [2024-H 7616A](#)) from Sen. Alana M. DiMario (D-Dist. 36, Narragansett, North Kingstown, New Shoreham) and Rep. June S. Speakman (D-Dist. 68, Warren, Bristol) to create the Rhode Island Renewable Ready program to aid the construction of renewable energy projects, such as solar farms, on former industrial sites. The measure now moves to the governor's office.  
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- **Assembly passes bill to expand parental, caregiving leave**  
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2024-S 2121Aaa](#), [2024-H 7171Aaa](#)) sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Valarie Lawson (D-Dist. 14, East Providence) and Rep. Joshua J. Giraldo (D-Dist. 56, Central Falls) to expand Rhode Island's Temporary Caregiver Insurance program from six weeks to eight, allowing new parents more time for parental leave and caregivers more time to care for a critically ill family member. The measure now moves to the governor's office.  
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- **General Assembly OKs bill to extend lookback period for repeat DUI offenses**  
The General Assembly passed legislation ([2024-S 2937aa](#), [2024-H 7631aa](#)) introduced by Sen. V. Susan Sosnowski (D-Dist. 37, South Kingstown) and Rep. Patricia Serpa (D-Dist. 27, West Warwick, Coventry, Warwick) that would extend the lookback period for repeat offenses of driving under the influence from five to 10 years. The measure now moves to the governor's office.  
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