

Jan. 13, 2017

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 of Representatives announces new committee chairs, speaker pro tempore**  
Speaker of the House Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) has appointed committee chairs for the 2017-18 legislative session. Among the changes, Rep. Robert B. Jacquard (D-Dist. 17, Cranston) will chair the Corporations Committee, Rep. Robert E. Craven (D-Dist. 32, North Kingstown) will chair the Labor Committee, Rep. Arthur J. Corvese (D-Dist. 55, North Providence) will chair the Rules Committee, Rep. Kathleen A. Fogarty (D-Dist. 35, South Kingstown) will chair the Municipal Government Committee and Rep. Samuel A. Azzinaro (D-Dist. 37, Westerly) will chair the Veterans' Affairs Committee. Also, Rep. Brian Patrick Kennedy (D-Dist. 38, Hopkinton, Westerly) was chosen to serve as speaker pro tempore.
- **Senate announces deputy majority leader appointments, new committee chair**  
President of the Senate M. Teresa Paiva Weed (D-Dist. 13, Newport, Jamestown) has appointed Sen. James E. Doyle II (D-Dist. 8, Pawtucket) senior deputy majority leader. Senators Frank S. Lombardi (D-Dist. 26, Cranston) and Donna M. Nesselbush (D-Dist. 15, Pawtucket, North Providence) were also chosen as deputy majority leaders. Among the changes in committee leadership, Sen. Frank A. Ciccone III (D-Dist. 7, Providence, North Providence) was appointed chairman of the Senate Committee on Housing and Municipal Government.
- **House announces deputy majority leader appointments**  
Speaker of the House Nicholas A. Mattiello (D-Dist. 15, Cranston) has appointed deputy majority leaders for the 2017-18 legislative session. They are Rep. Kenneth A. Marshall (D-Dist. 68, Bristol, Warren), senior deputy majority leader, Rep. Mia

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Ackerman (D-Dist. 45, Cumberland, Lincoln), Rep. Gregg Amore (D-Dist. 65, East Providence), Rep. Dennis M. Canario (D-Dist. 71, Portsmouth, Tiverton, Little Compton), Rep. Stephen M. Casey (D-Dist. 50, Woonsocket), Rep. Arthur J. Corvese (D-Dist. 55, North Providence), Rep. Gregory J. Costantino (D-Dist. 44, Lincoln, Smithfield, Johnston), Rep. Deborah A. Fellela (D-Dist. 43, Johnston), Rep. Raymond H. Johnston Jr. (D-Dist. 61, Pawtucket), Rep. Mary Duffy Messier (D-Dist. 62, Pawtucket), Rep. Michael A. Morin (D-Dist. 49, Woonsocket), Rep. William W. O'Brien (D-Dist. 54, North Providence), Rep. Jeremiah T. O'Grady (D-Dist. 46, Lincoln, Pawtucket) and Rep. Scott A. Slater (D-Dist. 10, Providence)

- **Reps. Maldonado, Tobon chosen to lead Black and Latino Caucus**  
 Members of the Rhode Island Legislative Black and Latino Caucus unanimously elected Rep. Shelby Maldonado (D-Dist. 56, Central Falls) and Rep. Carlos E. Tobon (D-Dist. 58, Pawtucket) to serve as co-chairs. The newest caucus members, who were elected to the General Assembly during the most recent election cycle, are Representatives Marcia Ranglin-Vassell (D-Dist. 5, Providence), Ramon Perez (D-Dist. 13, Providence, Johnston) and Sen. Ana B. Quezada (D-Dist. 2, Providence) [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Sen. McCaffrey introduces package of justice reinvestment bills**  
 As part of a broad scoped effort at justice reinvestment, Sen. Michael J. McCaffrey (D-Dist. 29, Warwick), chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, has once again submitted legislation that would bring about a massive overhaul of Rhode Island's probation and parole system. In the House, the same legislation was submitted by Representatives Robert E. Craven (D-Dist. 32, North Kingstown), Christopher R. Blazejewski (D-Dist. 2, Providence), Joseph S. Almeida (D-Dist. 12, Providence) and Edith H. Ajello (D-Dist. 1, Providence). [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. McNamara bill would establish deadlines for school safety assessments**  
 Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) has introduced legislation ([2017-H 5016](#)) that would establish time guidelines for the assessment of school building safety, along with reports to the governor, speaker of the House and president of the Senate. The bill would require the safety assessment of each school building to be completed by Nov. 1 of the year mandated. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Craven introduces legislation to curb surprise medical billing**  
 Rep. Robert E. Craven (D-Dist. 32, North Kingstown) introduced legislation ([2017-H 5012](#)) this week that creates a billing dispute resolution process for Rhode Islanders with health insurance for emergency services and surprise bills for medical services performed by out-of-network health care providers. [Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Sen. Satchell, Rep. Nardolillo's ABLE program launched at press conference**  
 Families of disabled children will be able to open tax-free investment accounts to support services for them in adulthood as the "Achieving a Better Life Experience" (ABLE) program was kicked off at a press conference in the State House held by General Treasurer Seth Magaziner. The program resulted from legislation ([2015-S](#)

[0465A / 2015-H 5564A](#)) sponsored by Sen. Adam J. Satchell (D-Dist. 9, West Warwick) and Rep. Robert A. Nardolillo III (R-Dist. 28, Coventry) that was passed in 2015 and signed into law.

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

- **Legislators roll out ‘Fair Shot Agenda’**

On Thursday a group of state representatives announced their collective support for the “Fair Shot Agenda,” a package of four legislative solutions they propose to support working families and address the growing gap between the wealthy and the middle class. The four pieces of the Fair Shot Agenda consist of earned paid sick days, a \$15 minimum wage, school building repairs, and a fairer tax system.

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