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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 passes McNamara bill to ban dangerous new opioid U-47700**
The House of Representatives has passed legislation ([2017-H 5035](#)) introduced by Rep. Joseph M. McNamara (D-Dist. 19, Warwick, Cranston) that would add a new synthetic opioid that has been blamed for a number of overdose deaths across the country to the list of controlled substances. The drug, U-47700, is nearly eight times more powerful than heroin. The deadly opioid is easily purchased online and shipped just about anywhere. The measure now heads to the Senate for consideration.
[Click here to see news release.](#)
- **Rep. Lima bill that calls for 38 Studios record release passes House**
Rep. Charlene M. Lima's (D-Dist. 14, Cranston, Providence) bill ([2017-H 5347Aaa](#)) that calls for the public release of all 38 Studios records passed the House of Representatives. House Minority Whip Blake A. Filippi (R-Dist. 36, New Shoreham, Charlestown, South Kingstown, Westerly) offered a floor amendment, which was passed, that further strengthened the requirements that all records should be publicly released, whether presented to a grand jury or not.
- **Senate Majority Leader Ruggerio's bill would ban clothing tax**
Senate Majority Leader Dominick J. Ruggerio (D-Dist. 4, Providence, North Providence) has introduced legislation ([2017-S-0468](#)) to repeal all taxes on clothing and footwear in Rhode Island. Under current law, clothing or footwear that costs more than \$250 per item is subject to Rhode Island's sales tax.
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More...

- **Rep. McLaughlin bill would provide daycare for children of service members**
Rep. James N. McLaughlin (D-Dist. 57, Cumberland, Central Falls) has introduced legislation that would provide daycare for the children of Rhode Islanders who serve in active duty in the armed forces. The bill ([2017-H 5170](#)) would offer daycare services at state expense for the children of any Rhode Island resident on active military duty for a period of time longer than 30 days.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Rep. Newberry bill would require civics literacy to be taught in schools**
Rep. Brian C. Newberry (R-Dist. 48, North Smithfield, Burrillville) has introduced the Civics Literacy Act ([2017-H 5665](#)), which if passed, would require the commissioner of elementary and secondary education to adopt a course of study promoting civics literacy. The course of study, proposed by Representative Newberry was introduced over general concern that civics literacy is declining nationwide. It would focus on the nation's founding and related documents, including the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Federalist Papers.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Rep. Kazarian bill would prohibit level III sex offenders from permanent hotel stays**
Rep. Katherine S. Kazarian (D-Dist. 63, East Providence) has introduced legislation ([2017-H 5722](#)) that would authorize an innkeeper to remove any guest who is a level III high risk sexual offender who attempts to remain a hotel or motel resident for more than 30 consecutive days.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Rep. Amore bill would tie municipal school funding to inflation, change in pupils**
Rep. Gregg Amore (D-Dist. 65, East Providence) has introduced legislation ([2017-H 5749](#)) that would amend the Foundation Level School Support Act to standardize the amount of local school aid contributed on a yearly basis. The legislation would provide two different avenues to do this by requiring local school aid to be determined by the amount of the previous year's aid, plus inflation or the local contribution for the previous fiscal year plus an increase on a per pupil basis for each additional pupil when average daily membership increases by at least one percent for two consecutive years.
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- **Rep. Marszalkowski bill would establish Public Corruption Unit in AG office**
Rep. Alex D. Marszalkowski (D-Dist. 52, Cumberland) has introduced legislation ([2017-H 5544](#)) that would codify the public corruption and white collar crime unit within the Department of the Attorney General. The unit would investigate and prosecute potential cases of abuse of public trust, and cooperate with the United States Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Rhode Island State Police, and the Rhode Island Ethics Commission on cases of abuse of the public's trust.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Rep. Canario bill would create study commission on marijuana legalization**
Rep. Dennis M. Canario (D-Dist. 71, Portsmouth, Little Compton, Tiverton) has introduced legislation ([2017-H 5551](#)) that would create a 15-member special legislative commission to study the effects of legalizing recreational marijuana in Rhode Island. The purpose of the commission would be to conduct a comprehensive review and make recommendations regarding marijuana and the effects of its use on the residents of Colorado and Washington to the extent available, and to study the fiscal impact to those states; and thereafter the potential impact on Rhode Island of legalized recreational marijuana.
[Click here to see news release.](#)

- **Rep. Tanzi legislation would raise tobacco age to 21**
Rep. Teresa Tanzi has introduced legislation to raise the minimum age to purchase tobacco products from 18 to 21. The legislation ([2017-H 5820](#)) would apply to all tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes, and would take effect Jan. 1, 2018. If passed, Rhode Island would become the third state to adopt 21 as the minimum age for tobacco purchases, after Hawaii and California, which enacted the change in 2015 and 2016 respectively.
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