



YMCA Youth And Government
Rhode Island Model Youth Legislature
Saturday, March 14th, 2026

Officers

Gabriella Paulino Cabrera, Governor	North Providence High School
Ella Procaccianti, Lt. Governor	The Prout School
Graeme Griffiths, President of the Senate	Exeter-West Greenwich High School
Lillian Weinstein, Speaker of the House	Barrington High School
Zaynadin Adam, Senate Pro Tempore	Exeter-West Greenwich High School
Ela Er, Deputy Speaker of House	Barrington High School
Isabella Crupe, Secretary of State	The Prout School
Dennis Gallagher, Attorney General	Bishop Hendricken
Orianna French, General Treasurer	Lincoln High School

Conference Schedule

8:30–9:00 a.m.	Arrival	
9:00 a.m.	Opening Session	House Chamber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Rhode Island Secretary of State Welcome○ Governor’s State of the State	
9:30	Chamber Debate	House & Senate Chambers
11:45	Lunch Break (Pizza Provided)	Bell Area
12:30	Chamber Debate	House & Senate Chambers
2:30 p.m.	Closing Session	House Chambers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Elections○ Awards	

Table of Contents

Conference Schedule	1
Our Mission	2
Committee Dockets	3
Chamber Dockets	4
Parliamentary Procedure Guide	5
Parliamentary Procedure Script	10
Bills	11

OUR MISSION

YMCA OF THE USA MISSION STATEMENT

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

YMCA DIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

The Y is made up of people of all ages and from every walk of life working side by side to strengthen communities. Together we work to ensure that everyone, regardless of ability, age, cultural background, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender identity, ideology, income, national origin, race or sexual orientation has the opportunity to reach their full potential with dignity. Our core values are caring, honesty, respect and responsibility—they guide everything we do.

CORE VALUES

Honesty Respect
Caring Responsibility

AREAS OF FOCUS



Youth Development
Nurturing the potential of every child and teen



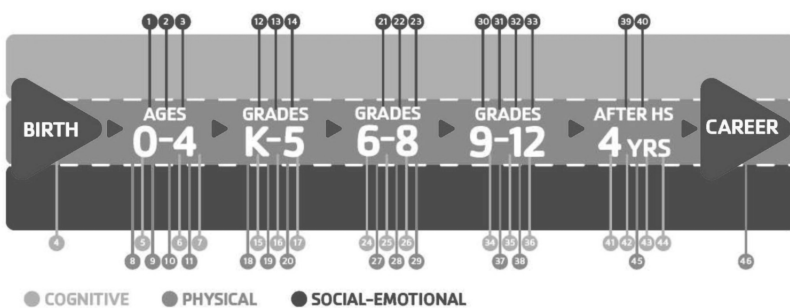
Healthy Living
Improving the nation's health and well-being



Social Responsibility
Giving back and providing support to our neighbors

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AT THE YMCA

YMCA Youth Development is the **social-emotional, cognitive, and physical** process that all youth uniquely experience from birth to career. A successful development process fulfills children and teens' innate need to be loved, spiritually grounded, educated, competent, and healthy.



Positive youth development is supported by the intentional efforts of individuals, including parents, mentors, teachers, community members, peers, and others who help foster the skills needed for successful living through motivation, active engagement, enriching activities, and healthy relationships.

DIMENSIONS OF WELL-BEING

At the Y, we support youth development by fostering nine dimensions of well-being: Character, Giving, Inspiration, Health, Achievement, Relationships, Belonging, Meaning, and Safety.

Youth Development at the Y emphasizes three of these dimensions when measuring the impact and effectiveness of our programs:

Achievement Relationships Belonging

THE FIVE PILLARS

To help ensure the fidelity and quality of our YMCA teen programs, we measure and seek to maximize impact using the following pillars:

Academics

Positive Relationships

Positive Identity

Life Skills

Civic Engagement (Youth and Government*)

*Each YMCA teen program has a unique pillar of measurement. As a Youth and Government program, we measure civic engagement.

Bill #	Delegation	Chamber	Comm.	Bill Sponsors		
37	Lincoln	Senate	1	Aubrie Gay		
19	The Prout	House	1	Hayden Gill		
17	The Prout	House	1	Parker Murray		
47	Woonsocket	Senate	1	Inara Gardner		
15	North Providence	House	1	Alexandra Martinez		
25	Barrington	Senate	1	Eilidh Thomson	Hayden Kelley	
27	Barrington	Senate	1	Teddy Pickford	Jay Barrass	
8	Coventry	House	1	Aubrey Zambarano	Ava Taveras	Eva McLaughlin
34	Exeter-West Greenwich	Senate	1	Zayn Adam		
31	Coventry	Senate	1	Lilly Chatterley	Natalie Johnston	
13	Lincoln	House	2	Nicholas Healey	Alexandra Lopes	
16	North Providence	House	2	Tomas Fernandes		
24	Bishop Hendricken	House	2	Jordan French		
28	Barrington	Senate	2	Daniel Monsour	Teddy Pickford	Latham Van Hull
5	Coventry	House	2	Maya Trahan		
18	The Prout	House	2	Marion Boyd		
1	Barrington	House	2	Ela Yucel	Owen Durham	
7	Coventry	House	2	Ellie Bamford	Spencer Knutton	
20	The Prout	House	2	Evan Reineke		
35	Exeter-West Greenwich	Senate	2	Eben Bamberry	Matt Zielinski	
6	Coventry	House	3	Sydney Pavao	Meagan Mulcahey	
48	Bishop Hendricken	Senate	3	Adam Barboza		
12	Lincoln	House	3	Orianna French		
10	Exeter-West Greenwich	House	3	Shreya Kumaraguru	Saanvi Patel	
44	The Prout	Senate	3	Gabe Girard		
29	Bay View Academy	Senate	3	Ariana Bobiak	Sophie Sullivan	
33	Coventry	Senate	3	Amara Neves	Maya Leonard	
39	North Providence	Senate	3	Maria Okechukwu		
2	Barrington	House	3	Jordan Burns	John Reynolds	Dylan Ignall
42	The Prout	Senate	3	Ella Procaccianti		
45	West Warwick	Senate	4	Jeremy Rice	Sophie Lee Rice	
40	Pilgrim	Senate	4	Addison Mendoza	Tiffany Blanco	
3	Barrington	House	4	Duffy Macaulay	Miles Dolan	
38	North Providence	Senate	4	Alex Dieffenbach	Maksim Pototskii	
9	Exeter-West Greenwich	House	4	Michael Sansone		
43	The Prout	Senate	4	Rylie Whitten		
36	Exeter-West Greenwich	Senate	4	Brody Ruggieri	Priya Cordeiro	
4	Bishop Hendricken	House	4	Dennis Gallagher		
32	Coventry	Senate	4	Dante Martinez		
46	West Warwick	Senate	5	Aaron Corbin	Lucas Martins	
11	Exeter-West Greenwich	House	5	Graeme Griffiths		
21	West Warwick	House	5	Landon Lafrenaye	Hayden Anderson	Skylar Bertenshaw Jake Gregson
26	Barrington	Senate	5	Graham Franke	Jordan Burns	Miles Dolan
23	Coventry	House	5	Ella Hitte	Collin Wilkins	
22	West Warwick	House	5	Jana Denise Madriaga	Cesar Gatica	
41	The Prout	Senate	5	Jake Daigle		
14	North Providence	House	5	Aaron Chellel		
30	Coventry	Senate	5	Grayson Lacroix		

Bill #	Delegation	Chamber	Comm.	Bill Sponsors		
7	Coventry	House	2	Ellie Bamford	Spencer Knutton	
19	The Prout	House	1	Hayden Gill		
23	Coventry	House	5	Ella Hitte	Collin Wilkins	
9	Exeter-West Greenwich	House	4	Michael Sansone		
5	Coventry	House	2	Maya Trahan		
12	Lincoln	House	3	Orianna French		
13	Lincoln	House	2	Nicholas Healey	Alexandra Lopes	
8	Coventry	House	1	Aubrey Zambarano	Ava Taveras	Eva Mclaughlin
17	The Prout	House	1	Parker Murray		
2	Barrington	House	3	Jordan Burns	John Reynolds	Dylan Ignall
21	West Warwick	House	5	Landon Lafrenaye	Hayden Anderson	Skylar Bertenshaw Jake Gregson
10	Exeter-West Greenwich	House	3	Shreya Kumaraguru	Saanvi Patel	
22	West Warwick	House	5	Jana Denise Madriaga	Cesar Gatica	
20	The Prout	House	2	Evan Reineke		
6	Coventry	House	3	Sydney Pavao	Meagan Mulcahey	
4	Bishop Hendricken	House	4	Dennis Gallagher		
15	North Providence	House	1	Alexandra Martinez		
18	The Prout	House	2	Marion Boyd		
24	Bishop Hendricken	House	2	Jordan French		
14	North Providence	House	5	Aaron Chellel		
3	Barrington	House	4	Duffy Macaulay	Miles Dolan	
11	Exeter-West Greenwich	House	5	Graeme Griffiths		
16	North Providence	House	2	Tomas Fernandes		
1	Barrington	House	2	Ela Yucel	Owen Durham	
Bill #	Delegation	Chamber	Comm.	Bill Sponsors		
28	Barrington	Senate	2	Daniel Monsour	Teddy Pickford	Latham Van Hull
48	Bishop Hendricken	Senate	3	Adam Barboza		
31	Coventry	Senate	1	Lilly Chatterley	Natalie Johnston	
44	The Prout	Senate	3	Gabe Girard		
43	The Prout	Senate	4	Rylie Whitten		
46	West Warwick	Senate	5	Aaron Corbin	Lucas Martins	
25	Barrington	Senate	1	Eilidh Thomson	Hayden Kelley	
32	Coventry	Senate	4	Dante Martinez		
36	Exeter-West Greenwich	Senate	4	Brody Ruggieri	Priya Cordeiro	
45	West Warwick	Senate	4	Jeremy Rice	Sophie Lee Rice	
37	Lincoln	Senate	1	Aubrie Gay		
38	North Providence	Senate	4	Alex Dieffenbach	Maksim Pototskii	
40	Pilgrim	Senate	4	Addison Mendoza	Tiffany Blanco	
26	Barrington	Senate	5	Graham Franke	Jordan Burns	Miles Dolan
30	Coventry	Senate	5	Grayson Lacroix		
42	The Prout	Senate	3	Ella Procaccianti		
27	Barrington	Senate	1	Teddy Pickford	Jay Barrass	
35	Exeter-West Greenwich	Senate	2	Eben Bamberry	Matt Zielinski	
29	Bay View Academy	Senate	3	Ariana Bobiak	Sophie Sullivan	
34	Exeter-West Greenwich	Senate	1	Zayn Adam		
41	The Prout	Senate	5	Jake Daigle		
33	Coventry	Senate	3	Amara Neves	Maya Leonard	
47	Woonsocket	Senate	1	Inara Gardner		
39	North Providence	Senate	3	Maria Okechukwu		

YMCA Youth and Government Youth Assembly Parliamentary Procedure Guide

1. Introduction

1. It is important to keep in mind that this is a CONFERENCE and not a legislative session. The major working objective is to prepare and consider in depth bills relating to crucial state concerns. The use of technical motions and restrictive parliamentary procedure are discouraged.
2. References in this document will follow the format of (area, section, subsection). If no subsection is specified, please refer to the entire section of text.
 - a. Example: "(see 2.1.a)" refers to the General Rules and Procedures, section 1, subsection a.

2. General Rules and Procedures

1. The Presiding Officers of the Conference shall serve as the Chairpersons for their respective Chamber and remain neutral during debate. The Committee Chairs shall serve as the Chairpersons for their respective Committee and remain neutral during debate.
 - a. Chairpersons will choose a clerk from among the Chamber if necessary.
2. The Chairpersons for the session shall have the right to call a delegate out of order if that delegate is being disruptive in nature or is breaking any other rule of procedure. This shall be done by the sole discretion of the Chairperson.
3. The Chairpersons for the session shall be the interpreter of these rules, and in such will rule upon any motion presented upon the floor. The Chairperson shall have complete discretion when choosing to recognize a motion.
4. Absolutely no clapping is permitted after the defeat of a bill or after any speaker. Spirt fingers are in order to show appreciation for the bill sponsors work towards the bill.
5. Controlled applause or spirit fingers will be allowed following the passage of a bill, but delegates may not leave their seats to congratulate the author.
6. Referencing of other bills is not in order.
7. Refer to another speaker as "a previous delegate," or "previous speaker" during debate.
8. Face and hand gestures are not permitted during another delegate's speech.
9. Remain seated and quiet during an author's opening and closing statements.
10. A delegate seeking to be recognized should remain seated and raise their placard. They should not call out.
11. Do not raise your placard or hand while a speaker is addressing the chamber.
12. The use of false debate will be called out of order during all sessions. A "False debate" shall be defined as a sarcastic speech, or being recognized to speak during debate but deliberately presenting arguments in favor of the opposing side. An example of false debate is a delegate being recognized to speak a pro statement but calling for the defeat of the bill. Agreeing with the intentions of the bill are not considered false debate.

13. The use of any prop while speaking will be called out of order during all sessions. A "Prop" shall be defined as any external, non-verbal element which is used during a recognition to demonstrate a point. Examples of props are, but are not limited to charts, pictures, magazines, printed research, etc. Brief gestures with a bill book or a notebook are not considered use of a prop.

3. Committee and Chamber Procedure

1. Each bill in Committee and Chamber shall be considered in the following manner:
 - a. Opening remarks by the bill author (4 minutes). The author may only reserve unused time to the author's summation.
 - b. Non-debatable, technical questions; (see 4.3 and 4.4).
 - c. Chairperson opens debate. Con and pro speakers will alternate; Debate must start and end with a con speaker. Upon recognition, the delegate shall thank the Chair, state their name, and delegation. A delegate may exercise up to three (3) of these actions without further impediment:
 - i. Address The Chamber.
 - ii. Ask a series of questions of the bill author, provided the author's permission is sought through and granted by the Chair (see 4.5).
 - iii. Make one motion, provided this intention is declared upon taking the floor. A motion shall preempt yielding the floor.
 - d. Delegates must continue to seek permission, through the chair, to pose a series of questions to the bill author.
 - e. A delegate must reserve their right to make a motion.
 - f. Yielding to another delegate is not in order during Committee or Chamber.
 - g. The floor is not relinquished by a speaker unless the delegate yields their time to the Chair, or their time has elapsed.
 - h. Author's summation (time reserved from opening statement).
 - i. Appropriate voting or ranking procedures will take place (see 6.1 or 6.2).
2. Previous question is in order after the first round of debate and must be approved by 2/3 of the assembly. For previous question to be moved prior to the time limit, all Presiding Officers in that Chamber must agree.
3. If a delegate is called out of order prior to addressing the floor, the chair shall seek a different, replacement, speaker of the same intent (con or pro) rather than a speaker of the opposing intent.

4. Technical Questions

1. During the period for technical questions, all questions must remain non-debatable.
2. Technical questions asked during debate may be debatable and non-debatable.
3. A non-debatable technical question shall consist of:
 - a. Questions that call for a factual response.

4. A debatable technical question shall consist of:
 - a. Questions that are hypothetical in nature.
 - b. Questions that call for an opinion or assumption of the bill author.
 - c. Questions that are not germane to the topic of the bill.
5. A series shall be defined as follows:
 - a. Three (3) technical questions during a period of technical questions.
 - b. Two (2) technical questions during a period of debate.

5. Motions during Committee and Chamber Sessions

1. The following motions are in order during a Committee Session:
 - a. Point of information, to ask for clarification on a rule of procedure.
 - b. Point of order, to object to a rule of procedure that is not being followed correctly.
2. The following motions are not in order during a Committee Session:
 - a. Motion to extend debate, to extend the period of debate.
 - b. Motion to move to the previous question, to end debate on a bill (refer to 3.2).
3. The following motions are in order during a Chamber Session:
 - a. Motion for a division, to request a vote by standing vote.
 - b. Motion to expel the Governor, to remove the Governor from the legislative chamber.
 - c. Motion to extend debate, to extend the period of debate.
 - d. Motion to move to the previous question, to end debate on a bill (refer to 3.2).
 - e. Point of information, to ask for clarification on a rule of procedure.
 - f. Point of order, to object to a rule of procedure that is not being followed correctly.

6. Voting & Ranking Procedures

1. Committee Procedure:
 - a. Delegates will rank their top bills after Committee using the voting criteria.
 - b. The top 4 bills in each chamber specific committee will heard in joint session.
 - c. All remaining bills will move on to Chamber Session.
2. Joint Session & Chamber Session Procedure:
 - a. Delegates will vote on the passage of each bill. This will occur after each bill has been presented.
 - b. Passage of a bill requires a simple majority, greater than half of the chamber (1/2).
 - c. Approval of a bill in the Chamber shall be recorded by delegates raising their placard in conjunction with a voice vote unless division of the chamber is called and recognized. In such a case, the vote shall be recorded by a standing vote. The Presiding Officers may call for a division if there is any doubt about the voice vote.

- d. Passed bills will be sent to the Youth Governor, to be either passed or vetoed.
 - e. Absolutely no clapping is permitted after the defeat of a bill or after any speaker. Spirt fingers are in order to show appreciation for the bill sponsors work towards the bill.
 - f. Controlled applause or spirit fingers will be allowed following the passage of a bill, but delegates may not leave their seats to congratulate the author.
3. Veto Override Procedure:
- a. Delegates will vote on whether the veto of the bill should be overridden. This will occur after each bill has been presented.
 - b. Passage of a bill requires a super majority, two-thirds of the chamber (2/3).
 - c. Approval of a bill during veto overrides shall be recorded by delegates raising their placard in conjunction with a voice vote unless division of the chamber is called and recognized. In such a case, the vote shall be recorded by a standing vote. The Presiding Officers may call for a division if there is any doubt about the voice vote.

7. Veto Override Procedure

1. Each bill passed in Chamber, which was vetoed by the Governor, shall have the right to be considered in the following manner:
 - a. A Motion to override the veto will be made by the bill author.
 - b. Cabinet member statement (1 minute). The cabinet member will explain why the bill was vetoed.
 - c. Opening remarks by the bill author (1 minute). The author may only yield unused time to the Chair.
 - d. Chairperson opens debate. One (1) con speaker and one (1) pro speaker will be recognized; Upon recognition, the delegate shall thank the Chair, state their name, and delegation. A delegate may exercise up to three (3) of these actions without further impediment:
 - i. Address The Chamber.
 - ii. Ask a series of questions of the bill author, provided the author's permission is sought through and granted by the Chair.
 - iii. Make one motion, provided this intention is declared upon taking the floor. A motion shall preempt yielding the floor.
 - e. Appropriate voting procedures will take place ([see 7.3](#)).

8. Changes to the Rules

1. Rules may be changed by submitting the proposed change in writing to the Presiding Officers at any time. The Presiding Officer will present the proposed change for a vote among all Presiding Officers. A simple majority is required for approval. Upon approval, the Presiding Officers shall recommend the rule change to the State Director for the next Conference. No changes to the rules will occur for the current conference.

9. Conclusion

1. While the Rules and Procedures of the Legislature provide a structured framework for conducting the conference, it is important to remember that the primary objective of the conference is to engage in meaningful discussions, develop critical thinking skills, and have a positive learning experience. It is essential for participants to approach the procedures with a sense of enthusiasm and a willingness to engage in constructive debate. The rules are designed to facilitate the process, but it is equally important to maintain a spirit of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility throughout the conference. Ultimately, the goal is to create an environment where delegates can learn, grow, and have fun while participating in the legislative process.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE SCRIPT

1. Chair: It is now time for bill (#). Are the bill sponsors for bill (#) present?
 - a. Bill Sponsors thank the chair and say they are present
2. Chair: Will the Clerk read the An act to/title of the bill
 - a. Clerk will read the An act to/title
3. Chair: Thank you. The Bill Sponsors will have 4 minutes to divide between their opening and closing statements and may begin when ready.
 - a. Bill Sponsors give their Opening Statement
4. Chair: Thank you. The Bill Sponsors have reserved (time) to their closing statements. Now that the time for Opening Statements has elapsed, we will now move into a period of Non-Debatable Technical Questions. Is there a technical question on the floor?
 - a. The chair will choose delegate with a raise placard
 - b. Delegates will continue asking questions until the chair announces for a final technical question.
5. Chair: Thank you. Now that the time for non-debatable technical questions has elapsed, we will move into a period of Con/Pro debate. Since the Bill Sponsors Opening statement was a speech in favor, I will now be looking for a speech in opposition. Is there a Con speech on the floor?
 - a. Chair will Alternate speeches in favor and in opposition, ending with a Con speech.
6. Chair: Seeing that the time for Con/Pro debate has elapsed, we will now move onto a period of closing statements. The Bill Sponsors have reserved (time) for their closing statements and may begin when ready.
 - a. The bill sponsors will give their closing statement

7. (In Committees)Chair: Thank you Bill Sponsors. We will now move on to the next bill.

7. (In Chambers)Chair: Thank you Bill Sponsors. We will now move on to a period of voting. All those in favor of the bill, please say "aye" in your normal speaking voice. *Give a beat before doing opposition vote* All those in opposition please say "nay" in your normal speaking voice.
8. Chair: In the eyes of the chair, this bill has (passed/defeated).



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 1

1 **Sponsors:** Ela Yucel and Owen Durham

2 **An Act To:** Provide grants to students at the RI School of Design for public art
3 projects

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** This bill proposes to establish a Rhode Island Student Public Art Grant
6 Program to commission and fund public artworks and murals created by eligible
7 RISD students for display in publicly accessible locations throughout the State.

8 **Summary of Provisions**

9 Section 1: Definitions

10 Rhode Island School of Design (RISD): A private institution of higher education
11 located in Providence, Rhode Island, accredited to grant undergraduate and
12 graduate degrees in art and design disciplines.

13 Eligible Student: A currently enrolled undergraduate or graduate student at the
14 Rhode Island School of Design who is at least eighteen (18) years of age and in
15 good academic standing at the time of application.

16 Public Artwork: An original work of visual art, including but not limited to murals,
17 sculptures, mosaics, or installations, created for placement in a location that is
18 accessible to the general public without charge.

19 Publicly Accessible Location: Property owned, leased, or operated by the State of
20 Rhode Island, a municipality, or a public authority, or privately owned property
21 subject to a written agreement guaranteeing public access.

22 Grant: A monetary award of public funds allocated for the design, creation,
23 fabrication, installation, and limited maintenance of a public artwork.

24 Rhode Island Council on the Arts (RISCA): An already established government
25 council that allocates funds to the arts.

26 Section 2: Provisions 1. RISCA (Rhode Island State Council on the Arts) will
27 establish and administer a grant program for the purpose of commissioning and
28 funding public artworks and murals created by eligible students of the RI School of
29 Design.

30 2. An application process will be developed by RISCA through which eligible
31 students may submit proposals for public artworks to be installed in publicly
32 accessible locations within the State of Rhode Island. These submitted proposals
33 will be evaluated and reviewed based on feasibility, artistic merit, and site
34 suitability. RISCA will award grants to selected eligible students for the creation and
35 installation of approved public artworks.

36 3. Grant funds will be used solely for costs directly related to the production and
37 installation of the Public Artwork, including materials, fabrication, installation, and
38 artist compensation.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 1

39 4. RISCA will require that all funded Public Artworks be installed in compliance with
40 applicable safety, building, and municipal regulations.

41 5. RISCA will maintain records of all awarded Grants, including the location, cost,
42 and description of each Public Artwork.

43 6. An annual grant of \$250,000 will be allotted to RISCA. This is to be used to
44 commission works of public art in publicly accessible locations by students at RISD.
45 Commissions should be no less than \$1,000 and no more than \$25,000 per
46 commission.

47 7. RISCA may adopt rules and procedures necessary to implement and enforce the
48 provisions of this Act.

49 8. Public Artworks funded under this Act will not be created as part of a course
50 requirement, academic assignment, or degree requirement at the Rhode Island
51 School of Design.

52 **Justification:** Public art plays a vital role in strengthening communities, supporting
53 local culture, and beautifying shared spaces. Rhode Island boasts a rich tradition of
54 visual arts and design, yet students at leading institutions such as the Rhode Island
55 School of Design often lack access to funded opportunities to transition their work
56 into public settings. The arts account for 3.3% of the state's GDP already, and
57 locally commissioned public art could help to foster a greater artistic environment.

58 **Fiscal Implications:** This bill will create a student public art grant program
59 administered by the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts. Initial funding is
60 estimated at \$250,000 annually, based on comparable art commission budgets in
61 similar state programs. Grant awards to RISD students for mural and public art
62 production will range from \$1,000 to \$25,000 per project, depending on scale and
63 materials, with an estimated 10 to 15 projects funded per year. Administrative
64 costs, including staffing and program oversight, are expected to be approximately
65 \$50,000 per year. The bill does not create an unfunded mandate, as funds will be
66 appropriated by the General Assembly and can be supplemented by private
67 donations or federal arts grants.

68 **Environmental Implications:** By supporting the creation and installation of
69 student-designed public artwork in publicly accessible locations, this bill will
70 enhance the social environment by promoting community engagement, cultural
71 enrichment, and civic pride. The bill will have minimal negative impact on the
72 physical environment, as all proposed projects will comply with existing building
73 codes and environmental regulations, and no large-scale land disturbance or
74 harmful materials will be funded.

75 **Effective Date:** Aims to take effect in the upcoming 2026-2027 school year.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 2

1 **Sponsors:** Jordan Burns, John Reynolds, and Dylan Ignall

2 **An Act To:** Restore Home Economics/Family Consumer Sciences. A Bill to
3 implement a class creation system

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** The purpose of this Act is to address declining life readiness skills among
6 secondary school students by restoring Home Economics / Family and Consumer
7 Sciences (FCS) as a required component of public education. As students face
8 increasing responsibility in personal finance, nutrition, self management, and family
9 well being, many lack formal instruction in these essential areas. This Act ensures
10 that every graduate of a Rhode Island public high school is equipped with practical
11 skills necessary for adulthood, independence, and long term success.

12 **Summary of Provisions**

13 Section 1: Definitions

14 Home Economics Course / Family and Consumer Sciences Course (FCS): A state
15 approved semester or yearlong instructional course designed to provide students
16 with practical life skills necessary for adulthood and independent living. The course
17 shall include, but not be limited to, instruction in financial literacy, nutrition, basic
18 cooking, sewing, household management, childcare fundamentals, career
19 readiness, budgeting, and personal organization.

20 Secondary School: Any publicly funded high school serving grades nine through
21 twelve. (9-12).

22 Required Course: A course that must be successfully completed as a condition of
23 graduation from a Rhode Island public high school.

24 Section 2: Provisions

25 Each public secondary school shall establish and offer at least one Home Economics
26 / Family and Consumer Sciences course approved by the Rhode Island Department
27 of Education (RIDE)

28 The curriculum must include:

29 Personal finance (banking, taxes, credit, budgeting)

30 Cooking and nutrition basics

31 Laundry, sewing, and household maintenance

32 Career preparation skills (resume building, interviews, time management)

33 Childcare and family well being awareness

34 The course shall count as one (1) graduation credit. The Department of Education
35 shall determine whether the credit applies toward health, social studies, career and
36 technical education, or elective requirements.

37 Schools may satisfy this requirement by expanding existing Family and Consumer
38 Sciences, personal finance, or Career and Technical Education programs, or by



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 2

39 creating new instructional offerings. Alternative instructional models, including
40 blended or project based learning, may be approved by RIDE to ensure
41 accessibility.

42 **Justification:** Students graduate knowing academic subjects but often lacking
43 basic life skills like managing money, cooking, or preparing for a job. Not every
44 student has the chance to learn these at home, so schools must help fill that gap.
45 This bill ensures all students gain practical skills needed for adulthood,
46 independence, and long-term success — not just classroom knowledge.

47 **Fiscal Implications:** Funding for the implementation of this Act shall be provided
48 through the State Education Budget under Title 16, including the establishment of a
49 categorical grant to support curriculum development, instructional materials,
50 facilities, and equipment related to Home Economics / Family and Consumer
51 Sciences instruction.

52 School districts may also utilize available federal funds, including but not limited to:
53 Career and Technical Education (CTE) grants;

54 Federal Title II-A and Title IV funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA);
55 Other state or federal education grants approved by RIDE (RIDE shall prioritize
56 funding to ensure no district is financially burdened in meeting the requirements of
57 this Act.)

58 3. The Rhode Island Department of Education shall establish or designate
59 appropriate certification and endorsement pathways for Home Economics / Family
60 and Consumer Sciences educators, including provisional certification options for
61 individuals with relevant professional experience. Individuals with backgrounds in
62 finance, nutrition, early childhood education, or skilled trades may qualify for fast-
63 track certification pathways. Funding may be used for teacher training, certification,
64 and professional development.

65 **Effective Date:** This Act shall take effect at the beginning of the 2026–2027
66 school year following passage. Full graduation requirement enforcement shall begin
67 no later than the 2028–2029 school year.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 3

1 **Sponsors:** Duffy Macaulay and Miles Dolan

2 **An Act To:** Rhode Island Rejuvenation Period in Schools Act

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** Adequate sleep is essential to children’s physical health, mental health,
5 emotional regulation, and cognitive development. Scientific research demonstrates
6 that short, structured rest periods during the school day improve attention,
7 memory, behavior, and academic performance, particularly for elementary-age
8 students. Many students experience sleep deprivation due to early school start
9 times, family responsibilities, extracurricular activities, and socioeconomic factors
10 beyond their control. Schools have a responsibility to support the overall well-being
11 of students in order to promote equitable educational outcomes.

12 **Summary of Provisions**

13 Section 1: Definitions

14 Rejuvenation Period means a quiet, supervised rest period during the school day in
15 which students may sleep or rest quietly.

16 School means a public school serving students in high school through grade twelve
17 (9–12).

18 Local education agency means any school district, charter school, or public school
19 entity operating within the State of Rhode Island.

20 Section 2: Provisions

21 (a) Beginning with the 2026–2027 school year, each local education agency
22 operating a school k-12 shall implement a daily rejuvenation time or quiet rest
23 period for students in kindergarten through grade twelve.

24 (b) The rejuvenation time or quiet rest period shall:

- 25 1. Last no fewer than twenty (20) minutes and no more than thirty (30) minutes;
26 2. Occur during the regular instructional day;
27 3. Take place in a safe, quiet, and developmentally appropriate environment;
28 4. Allow students who do not sleep to engage in silent, non-disruptive activities
29 such as reading or quiet reflection.

30 (c) Participation in rejuvenation time shall not be graded or used for disciplinary
31 purposes.

32 Parental Opt-Out

33 (a) A parent or legal guardian may opt their child out of rejuvenation time by
34 submitting a written request to the school.

35 (b) Students who are opted out shall be provided with a supervised quiet activity
36 during the rejuvenation time period.

37 Local Flexibility



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 3

38 (a) Local education agencies may adjust the structure and scheduling of
39 rejuvenation time to align with existing schedules and student needs, provided the
40 minimum requirements of this act are met.

41 (b) Schools may integrate rejuvenation time with social-emotional learning,
42 mindfulness practices, or wellness programs.

43 **Justification:** The purpose of this act is to promote student wellness and learning
44 readiness by encouraging developmentally appropriate rest periods during the
45 school day.

46 **Fiscal Implications:** (a) The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) shall
47 provide guidance and best practices for implementing rejuvenation time programs.

48 (b) Subject to appropriation, RIDE may distribute grants to assist schools with
49 necessary materials, storage, or training.

50 **Effective Date:** This act shall take effect upon passage, with implementation
51 required beginning in the 2026–2027 school year



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 4

1 **Sponsors:** Dennis Gallagher

2 **An Act To:** Regulate and Limit Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
3 Activities in the State of Rhode Island

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** The purpose of this bill is to regulate the conduct and
6 procedures of Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents working in the state of
7 Rhode Island to protect the civil liberties of its residents.

8 **Summary of Provisions**

9 Section 1: Definitions

10 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE): A federal law enforcement agency
11 within the United States Department of Homeland Security responsible for
12 immigration enforcement.

13 Uniformed Agent: An ICE agent wearing identifiable clothing that displays
14 their agency and a visible badge number or name. The use of face coverings such
15 as balaclavas, neck gaiters, tactical face wraps, ski masks, or tactical
16 hoods are not permitted.

17 Racial Profiling: The use of race, ethnicity, language, or accent as a basis for
18 suspicion or enforcement action absent individualized probable cause.

19 Indiscriminate Sweep: A large-scale enforcement action conducted
20 without clear probable cause or a judicial warrant.

21 Militarization: The use of military-style equipment, vehicles, weapons, or
22 tactics not reasonably necessary for civil immigration enforcement.

23 Section 2: Provisions

24 ICE agents operating within the State of Rhode Island must be clearly identifiable
25 through visible agency symbols and badge numbers when performing enforcement
26 actions. ICE agents shall not conceal their faces while on duty and conducting
27 operations in the state Enforcement actions must be based on individualized
28 probable cause or a valid judicial warrant. State and local agencies shall
29 not participate in or assist in any way with indiscriminate sweeps or enforcement
30 operations involving unnecessary militarized tactics. Racial profiling is strictly
31 prohibited in any enforcement action involving state or local cooperation.

32 - Until the standards outlined in this act are met, the State of Rhode Island and all
33 state and local law enforcement agencies shall decline cooperation with
34 Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operations that do not comply
35 with the standards of this act. Non-cooperation will include: The use of state or
36 local personnel in ICE operations, the use of state or local facilities, property,
37 equipment, or databases; participation in joint task forces or coordinated
38 enforcement actions; assistance in arrests, detentions, or transportation.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 4

39 Any state or local official who authorizes cooperation in violation of this act shall be
40 subject to review and disciplinary action under state law. Any person who is
41 affected by an enforcement action that breaks this law, and involves state or local
42 cooperation, has the right to take legal action under Rhode Island civil rights law.

43 **Justification:** Immigrant communities make significant contributions to the State
44 of Rhode Island's economy, workforce, and culture. In recent months the
45 aggressive, unconstitutional behavior of immigration enforcement agents have
46 killed and maimed US citizens, torn apart families, and eroded the civil liberties of
47 citizens and non-citizens alike. Rhode Islanders should not have to fear racial
48 profiling or indiscriminate enforcement actions at the hands of masked,
49 ununiformed agents with insufficient training. The Constitution of the United States
50 guarantees due process and equal protection to all persons within its jurisdiction,
51 not solely citizens. While immigration enforcement is under federal jurisdiction, the
52 state of Rhode Island has the authority to determine how its own resources are
53 used. Furthermore, the state of Rhode Island has the duty to protect residents from
54 discrimination and civil rights violations like the ones being perpetrated across the
55 country right now. Immediate action is necessary to ensure that the rights and
56 safety of all Rhode Islanders are protected.

57 **Fiscal Implications:** There are no fiscal implications for this bill

58 **Effective Date:** This bill will go into effect immediately upon its passage.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 5

1 **Sponsors:** Maya Trahan

2 **An Act To:** Protect Patients From Medical Malpractice

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** Medical professionals who have earned a license for medical treatment
5 shall be obligated to undergo necessary training to ensure medical professionals
6 stay current with the advances in the medical field. All hospitals statewide will be
7 required to provide continuous training for medical professionals. All existing legal
8 framework allowing patients to file for a negligence suit will be properly supported

9 **Summary of Provisions**

10 Section 1: Definitions

11 Patient protection shall refer to the continuous training of licensed medical
12 professionals meant to reinforce the knowledge of individuals working in the
13 medical profession.

14 Medical Malpractice shall refer to a licensed medical professional's negligent
15 performance on a patient being hospitalized.

16 Licensed Medical Professional shall refer to persons who have met all requirements
17 for medical treatment under Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH),

18 Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Children, Youth & Families
19 (DCYF); as well as received the highest level of certifications provided by RIDOH.

20 Damages shall refer to any injured parties under the care of a licensed medical
21 professional with clear and convincing evidence of medical malpractice.

22 Negligence shall refer to medical care that falls below the standard of medical care
23 leading to an injury or fatality under Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH)
24 and/or R.I Gen. Laws § 9-1-14.1. (Laws describing the requirements to file for a

25 negligence suit for another party's failure to provide a reasonable standard of care)

26 Standard of Care shall refer to proper care given to hospitalized patients under

27 Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) and/or under R.I. Gen. Laws § 23-17-
28 19.1. (Laws outlining the basic rights of a patient in hospitalization)

29 Section 2: Provisions

30 1. Medical professionals who have earned a license for medical treatment shall be
31 obligated to undergo necessary training to ensure medical professionals stay
32 current with the advances in the medical field.

33 2. All hospitals statewide will be required to provide continuous training for medical
34 professionals

35 3. All existing legal framework allowing patients to file for a negligence suit will be
36 properly supported

37 **Justification:** Requiring all hospitals to provide continuous and necessary training
38 for all licensed medical professionals employed at the facility will limit the injuries



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 5

39 and potential fatalities due to medical malpractice. In addition, there have been
40 many cases where medical malpractice has been covered up by the hospital
41 providing the care. Installing this type of law will ensure the safety of patients as
42 hospitals will be required to provide continuous training for all licensed medical
43 professionals employed at the facility. Other states have this type of law in effect,
44 however not to the extent that the bill being proposed.

45 **Fiscal Implications:** 1. Medical professionals who are found responsible for an
46 injury due to medical malpractice will receive a suspension of their medical license
47 up to a year.

48 2. Medical professionals who are found responsible for an injury due to medical
49 malpractice for a second offense will receive a suspension of their medical license
50 up to a year as well as the mandated completion of a 100 hour training program.

51 3. Once a medical professional has received a third offense for medical malpractice
52 it will result in their medical license being revoked

53 4. Hospitals shall be required to pay restitution to the injured party; all proceedings
54 shall go to that individual and/or the family.

55 **Effective Date:** August 28th, 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 6

1 **Sponsors:** Sydney Pavao and Meagan Mulcahey

2 **An Act To:** Ensure Housing Opportunities for All

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** This bill will prevent corporations from buying and reselling/renting single
5 family homes in order to keep housing prices down and more affordable.

6 **Summary of Provisions**

7 **Section 1: Definitions**

8 Corporations: A corporation qualifies as a legal entity, separate from its owners
9 (shareholders), that is created by filing articles of incorporation with a state

10 Single Family Home: This is land that is zoned to be a residential area, that was
11 designed to support domestic life, including sleeping, cooking, and personal
12 activities, often with secure entry points like doors and locks.

13 Renting: Paying a person/company monthly for the permission to use and access a
14 property.

15 Large Institutional Investor- A large institutional investor is a professional entity
16 that pools vast amounts of money from many sources (such as pension funds,
17 mutual funds, banks, or endowments) to invest on behalf of others.

18 **Section 2: Provisions**

19 The penalty for this crime would be a fine of double the value they earned from the
20 property whether they sold or rented it out. If rented, the fine would be monthly.

21 **Justification:** Housing is a necessary part of life that should be made accessible to
22 all. Companies like Blackrock buying and reselling houses make the prices of
23 houses overall skyrocket. If more houses are made available to people, people will
24 have more peace of mind and be able to spend their money more freely. This will
25 directly help the economy. Additionally, it would be better for the residents of
26 Rhode Island's quality of living. People would not be forced to reside in a small
27 apartment that barely fits into their budget. In the California State Assembly they
28 proposed similar laws to this (Assembly Bill 2584 (AB 2584). This bill aimed to stop
29 large institutional investors from buying more than 1,000 single-family homes in
30 the state and converting them to rentals, with penalties for violations.

31 **Fiscal Implications:** The RI Government would get more money from fines on
32 these companies.

33 **Effective Date:** This bill would go into effect on January 1st, 2027.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 7

1 **Sponsors:** Ellie Bamford and Spencer Knutton

2 **An Act To:** Prohibit the sale, possession, and transfer of high-capacity magazines
3 and firearms within the State of Rhode Island.

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** The purpose of this act is to reduce gun violence by prohibiting the sale,
6 possession, and transfer of high-capacity magazines and firearms.

7 **Summary of Provisions**

8 Section 1: Definitions

9 High-capacity magazine means any ammunition feeding device with the capacity to
10 accept more than ten (10) rounds of ammunition, including detachable magazines,
11 belts, drums, feed strips, or similar devices.

12 Firearm capable of accepting a high-capacity magazine means any semi-automatic
13 firearm designed to accept a detachable magazine that holds more than ten (10)
14 rounds of ammunition.

15 Transfer means the sale, gift, loan, assignment, or conveyance of a firearm or
16 magazine, whether or not compensation is provided.

17 Law enforcement officer means any sworn officer employed by a federal, state, or
18 municipal law enforcement agency acting within the scope of official duties.

19 Section 2: Provisions

20 The provisions of this act shall not apply to:

21 1. Law enforcement officers or military personnel acting in the course of official
22 duties;

23 2. Firearms or magazines possessed by the State of Rhode Island or its political
24 subdivisions;

25 3. Firearms rendered permanently inoperable;

26 4. Firearms or magazines lawfully possessed prior to the effective date of this act,
27 provided that such items are not transferred after the effective date.

28 **Justification:** The purpose of this act is to reduce gun violence by prohibiting the
29 sale, possession, and transfer of high-capacity magazines and firearms.

30 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A

31 **Effective Date:** This act shall take effect on June 1, 2026.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 8

1 **Sponsors:** Aubrey Zambarano, Ava Taveras, and Eva Mclaughlin

2 **An Act To:** Improve how schools handle student athlete concussions

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** This bill is to mandate an immediate concussion screening after an
5 accident that involves a traumatic brain injury during a school - related practice or
6 game.

7 **Summary of Provisions**

8 Section 1: Definitions

9 Concussion: A mild traumatic brain injury (TBI) from a jolt, blow, or hit to the head
10 or body, causing the brain to move rapidly inside the skull, creating chemical
11 changes and damaging brain cells, leading to symptoms like headache, confusion,
12 dizziness, memory problems, and sensitivity to light/noises.

13 Fine: Sum of money or consequence being paid by the school district as a result of
14 breaking the law or disregarding an enforced act.

15 SCAT5 Test: Standardized, multi-component tool to evaluate athletes (13+) for
16 concussion, assessing symptoms, memory, concentration, balance (mBESS), and
17 neurological signs, and is also used for baseline testing before injury to help guide
18 return-to-play decisions.

19 Concussion protocol (screening):

20 1. Suspicion of head injury (seen or told about it)

21 2. Pull player off of field immediately

22 3. Complete the SCAT5 test on sight - performed by coach (trained during
23 mandatory RIIL and state law to maintain certification in First Aid and CPR) (5-10
24 minutes)

25 4. Determine athlete's standing within the test, take necessary steps defined in
26 SCAT5 chart (school and parents should be immediately notified of injury and
27 SCAT5 test results)

28 Section 2: Provisions

29 The purpose of this bill is to mandate an immediate concussion screening directly
30 after a suspected head injury has occurred during high school practices and games,
31 in order to protect athletes from serious injury or further damage to the brain that
32 may occur from participating in athletic events with an unknown (or known)
33 concussion.

34 **Justification:** This bill would be applicable and favorable to all high school student-
35 athletes in the state of Rhode Island. By creating a mandated concussion protocol,
36 consisting of an at-scene screening and questions conducted immediately after
37 suspected head injury has occurred, the athlete will be prevented from continuing
38 in the activity. If the athlete and coach were to disregard a suspected concussion,



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 8

39 the symptoms that could occur, such as headaches, dizziness, and memory issues
40 could become long-lasting or recurring as time progressed, impacting the life of the
41 student-athlete forever. Without proper treatment immediately following the injury,
42 dangerous brain swelling (Second Impact Syndrome) or internal bleeding can occur,
43 which could result in permanent injury or death. By passing this act, high school
44 athletes will be protected from neglectful coaches who push them to continue in
45 games or practices even after sustaining head injuries, and from the possible life-
46 long symptoms that come with not prioritizing concussions recovery. By training
47 coaches annually on the SCAT5 testing, it can also increase the understanding of
48 the severity of concussions, preventing coaches from entering injured athletes into
49 scenarios that could lead to worsened symptoms.

50 **Fiscal Implications:** None

51 **Effective Date:** August, 2026 or at the beginning of the 2026-27 school year.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 9

1 **Sponsors:** Michael Sansone

2 **An Act To:** Solve Rhode Island's housing availability and affordability crisis.

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** The purpose of this bill is to implement statewide standards preventing
5 zoning municipalities from enacting excessive and destructive regulation and
6 restrictions pertaining to housing development and land use. It will drastically
7 reduce many specific regulations and standardize certain limits on regulations
8 throughout the state.

9 **Summary of Provisions**

10 Section 1: Definitions

11 Zoning- How state land is divided and separated into different zones which all make
12 their own regulations pertaining to housing and land use

13 Zoning municipality- refers to a specific zone which regulates land uses and
14 standards

15 Accessory dwelling unit- A separate living space or unit on somebody's property

16 Special use permit- a permit which is required for land uses or developments that
17 are not usually permitted within a zoning district

18 By right use- Some sort of development or use that is allowed automatically and
19 does not require any special approval or permit

20 Multi-family housing- Houses which are designed to accommodate multiple
21 households within one building

22 Section 2: Provisions

23 This bill aims to significantly reduce the extensive statewide restrictions on matters
24 of land use and housing development. This would include the following matters:

25 1. Allow for multi-family housing development by right state wide

26 2. Decrease the amount of primary residential regulation and increase mixed use
27 zoning; set a statewide minimum of 25% of each regulated area being allowed
28 mixed use development.

29 3. Eliminate and decrease lot size requirements; Allow for zoning municipalities only
30 to require at most 10,000 square feet of lot size for single family homes

31 4. Ensure the legality of Accessory dwelling units

32 5. Reform parking requirements by limiting regulation to a maximum of one
33 required parking space per unit

34 6. Set a 60 day time limit for towns to approve or deny a special use permit for any
35 sort of development or other use.(If no decision is made, and the development
36 follows the basic health and safety standards, it is automatically approved)

37 **Justification:** "Throughout our state, zoning laws and regulations control how
38 virtually every piece of land is used—whether for homes, businesses, or a mix.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 9

39 While complex zoning may be intended to influence and create orderly, structured
40 development, in Rhode Island, more than 80% of residential land is zoned for
41 single-family homes only, which severely limits what kind of homes can be built and
42 where. This is the major cause of our current housing crisis.
43 According to a report from HousingWorks RI, there is not a single Rhode Island
44 municipality where the typical household can afford a single family home. The
45 reason behind Rhode Island's affordability crisis is as simple as supply and demand.
46 By heavily restricting and controlling development, these regulations limit the
47 supply of houses, which inevitably drives up prices. Rhode Island currently ranks
48 42nd out of 50 on the Cato institutes index of freedom in the category of land use
49 regulation. Currently many developers need special permits just to build multi-
50 family housing or mixed-use projects. This increases the time, expense, and
51 uncertainty of building, causing housing shortages and monstrous prices.
52 Developments often have minimum lot sizes of 10,000 square feet or more, which
53 makes it nearly impossible to build higher density, affordable housing. Additionally,
54 many towns can and do impose excessive parking requirements that require up
55 multiple parking spaces per unit. Aside from being inefficient and utterly
56 unnecessary in urban areas, this even further limits housing density, which drives
57 up costs. Many supporters of comprehensive zoning and strict land use
58 regulations claim that it protects the character of communities and protects
59 property values. But to be clear, this doesn't protect everyday Rhode Islanders.
60 Instead, it artificially protects exclusivity. By keeping housing limited, zoning
61 regulations make it harder for average people to live near where they work or raise
62 families near essential services.
63 Lots of regulations also slow down developments through a range of unnecessary
64 delays, forcing property builders to wait months for approvals. This bill ensures that
65 special use permits must be approved or denied within 60 days of being applied for,
66 preventing endless bureaucratic holdups. Many people cite these regulations as
67 protecting the environment, but in reality these laws promote car dependency by
68 separating residential areas from businesses, leading to higher carbon emissions.
69 This also creates long commutes and higher costs for residents.
70 Some may have concerns about development deregulation leading to an onset of
71 urban slums and unsafe housing. In practice it will lead to quite the opposite. This
72 bill would be extremely effective at combating homelessness throughout Rhode
73 Island. Currently, if you're homeless and would like to purchase a home that you
74 can actually afford but doesn't meet certain arbitrary safety standards that don't
75 pose a serious issue in your life, the government tells you that you can't make that



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 9

76 voluntary purchase. Also, affordable housing is not synonymous with low quality
77 housing. Builders would still be incentive to provide the highest quality housing
78 possible because that is what people want and is therefore what will make the most
79 profit. More than likely this would result in higher quality housing with lower prices;
80 making housing both better and more affordable. Aside from allowing for the
81 poorest Rhode islanders to afford a house or apartment; bringing them out of the
82 slums and raising their standard of living, more luxury housing would also be able
83 to be built where there is a demand for it(attracting wealth to R.I).

84 This bill is ultimately about expanding choice, restoring flexibility, and making
85 Rhode Island livable. It offers Rhode Islanders more housing choices, lowers costs,
86 and respects property rights. We need to stop pushing families out of the market
87 through regulation. This bill should be supported in order to take a large step
88 toward a free and livable future in this great state.

89 **Fiscal Implications:** This bill is one of deregulation and requires no extra money
90 spent. In terms of economic effects, It will result in the development of more
91 businesses and all types of housing, adding money and jobs into the economy.

92 **Environmental Implications:** Some may worry that massive deregulation will
93 lead to overdevelopment and environmental harm. In reality, letting people make
94 their own choices regarding their housing and allowing for natural development will
95 reflect a community's needs. Over development would not be incentivized as it
96 would result in wasted resources and lower profits. Oftentimes it's the excessive
97 regulation which causes misguided development decisions and results in failed
98 projects which use environmental resources and then don't even end up being of
99 use to anybody. Additionally, certain provisions like allowing for more mixed use
100 land area, or more business development, will decrease the average distance
101 between people's homes and job locations, reducing car usage and carbon
102 emissions.

103 **Effective Date:** January 1, 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 10

1 **Sponsors:** Shreya Kumaraguru and Saanvi Patel

2 **An Act To:** Restrict the Coercion of Town, Local, and State Police into Assisting ICE

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** This law prohibits both state and local enforcement from establishing or
5 renewing agreements with ICE for the enforcement of Immigration and Customs
6 Enforcement (ICE) regulations through 287(g) agreements. Furthermore, it
7 prohibits state and local law enforcement from being issued ""deputized"" authority
8 to conduct federal civil immigration enforcement and from utilizing taxpayer-funded
9 employees, resources, or facilities to detain civil immigration detainees. This
10 legislation will not prevent the cooperation of federal and state authorities when
11 required or authorized by state or federal law. Furthermore, this legislation does
12 not prohibit co-investigations into criminal conduct or the independent enforcement
13 of immigration laws by federal authorities in this State. The purpose of this
14 legislation is to maintain a federalism that is constitutional in nature, to promote
15 civil liberties, and to protect state and local law enforcement from being used to
16 undertake enforcement of federal civil immigration laws.

17 **Summary of Provisions**

18 **Section 1: Definitions**

19 **Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE):** The federal agency within the U.S.
20 **Department of Homeland Security responsible for enforcing federal immigration**
21 **laws.**

22 **Deputized:** The formal authorization of a state or local law enforcement officer to
23 **act with federal authority under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality**
24 **Act.**

25 **287(g) Agreement:** A formal partnership authorized under federal law allowing
26 **state and local law enforcement agencies to perform certain federal immigration**
27 **enforcement functions.**

28 **Section 2: Provisions**

29 No state or local law enforcement agency may enter into, renew, or participate in
30 an agreement under Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. No
31 state or local funding, resources, property, or facilities for keeping someone in jail
32 may be used to enforce or detain someone under federal civil immigration law.
33 Allow for any federal or state cooperation on criminal investigations that are being
34 conducted jointly by federal and state governments. Require states or local
35 governments to comply with any federal or state law or regulation that requires
36 sharing information between state and local governments. Stop anyone with federal
37 authority from carrying out their duties. This Act will be interpreted to be consistent
38 with the Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 10

39 **Justification:** Federal immigration enforcement is under the domain of the federal
40 government. While the US Constitution gives supremacy to federal law, the federal
41 government cannot compel states to enforce or perform federal regulatory
42 functions. The state and local government have gradually taken on a more
43 substantial role in federal civil immigration enforcement through 287(g)
44 agreements, thus diverting local resources from their responsibilities of community
45 policing and public safety. The bill strengthens constitutional federalism by
46 reiterating that the states are not required to interpret and enforce or perform
47 federal civil immigration laws. It preserves the state-federal balance of power while
48 allowing federal agents to operate independently in the state. As immigration
49 enforcement continues to be a national issue, proactively establishing these limits
50 will ensure the following: Fiscal Responsibility; Compliance With the Constitution;
51 and A Clear Focus on Local Crime Prevention.

52 **Fiscal Implications:** The fiscal implications of this bill are ending overtime for
53 town, local, and state police helping with ICE investigations. By abolishing 287(g)
54 agreements, this bill intends to reduce the cost of participation by eliminating costs
55 related to participation and refocusing State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies'
56 (SLEAs') resources away from federal programs and back to local public safety
57 priorities. While it is possible that the federal government may provide less funding
58 for programs funded under these agreements, savings generated by the elimination
59 of overtime and detention expenses are likely to more than offset these potential
60 losses.

61 **Effective Date:** "This bill will go into effect as soon as it is passed.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 11

1 **Sponsors:** Graeme Griffiths

2 **An Act To:** Allow For Freedom in Death

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** This bill legalizes postmortem alkaline hydrolysis and organic reduction
5 and sets out guidelines for future licensure and registration procedures.

6 **Summary of Provisions**

7 **Section 1: Definitions**

8 Alkaline hydrolysis - The usage of specialized equipment and water mixed with
9 potassium hydroxide to dissolve a body in a process meant to produce an effect
10 similar to cremation.

11 Organic Reduction - The process of storing bodies in specialized vessels to
12 accelerate the process of decomposition and produce soil like remains for the
13 families of deceased individuals.

14 Interested Parties - This committee should include representatives of the funeral
15 industry as well as individuals who have been advocating for the legalization of
16 these methods. The committee should seek to ensure an equal representation of
17 diverse viewpoints.

18 **Section 2: Provisions**

19 1. Postmortem alkaline hydrolysis and organic reduction shall be considered legal
20 methods of postmortem body disposal under Rhode Island law.

21 2. The Rhode Island Department of Health shall form a committee consisting of
22 representatives of the interested parties to draft a policy of licensure and
23 registration for individuals interested in providing services related to alkaline
24 hydrolysis and organic reduction. The committee will also draft any relevant
25 guidelines relating to the byproducts of these services. After public comment and
26 legislative review, the policy will be amended as needed by the committee. The
27 final policy will be implemented by the Rhode Island Department of Health.

28 **Justification:** In the year 2026, Rhode Islanders have a great many freedoms in
29 life. However, in death, Rhode Islanders have very few. The average individual has
30 two options: burial or cremation. Rhode Islanders should have greater say in what
31 happens to their bodies after death and this law aims to accomplish that by
32 legalizing more options for the disposal of bodies post death. These methods are
33 affordable and ecofriendly, which make these options of interest to a great many
34 people. Whether or not you would like these options for your postmortem
35 experience, I hope we can all recognize that we should allow individuals to have the
36 dignity of having their own preferences after death honored

37 **Fiscal Implications:** This proposal has no major fiscal impact on the state.

38



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 11

39 **Environmental Implications:** This proposal will have a positive environmental
40 impact as these alternatives are less carbon intensive than traditional burial
41 options.

42 **Effective Date:** January 1, 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 12

1 **Sponsors:** Orianna French

2 **An Act To:** Restrict unnecessary animal testing in Rhode Island.

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** Animal testing in Rhode Island often causes unnecessary suffering and is
5 sometimes conducted even when effective, humane alternatives exist. This bill will
6 require all animal research to undergo independent review and RIDEM (Rhode
7 Island Department of Environmental Management) approval, ensuring that animals
8 are used only when absolutely necessary and in the minimum numbers required.
9 Labs must document why alternative testing cannot be used, and all research
10 protocols and outcomes must be publicly reported. Additionally, the bill promotes
11 the adoption of non-animal research methods by offering grants to universities and
12 institutions, funded in part by fines collected from violations.

13 **Summary of Provisions**

14 **Section 1: Definitions**

15 Animal: Any vertebrate species, including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians,
16 and fish, used in research, testing, or as pets.

17 Animal testing: Any experiment, procedure, or research activity conducted on live
18 animals that may cause pain, suffering, distress, or lasting harm.

19 Humane alternatives: Non-animal research methods, including computer modeling,
20 cell cultures, synthetic tissue, and microdosing in humans, that provide valid
21 scientific results without causing harm to animals.

22 Independent review board: A committee of experts, separate from the research
23 institution, responsible for evaluating whether proposed animal testing is necessary
24 and ethical.

25 RIDEM approval: Authorization from the Rhode Island Department of Environmental
26 Management to conduct animal research, confirming that no suitable humane
27 alternatives exist and that testing follows state welfare standards.

28 **Section 2: Provisions**

29 1. All animal research conducted in the State of Rhode Island shall undergo review
30 and approval by an independent review board prior to commencement.

31 2. The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) shall
32 review and approve all animal research, ensuring that no suitable humane
33 alternatives exist and that all testing is necessary.

34 3. Laboratories and research institutions using animals shall document why non-
35 animal alternatives cannot be used, and this documentation shall be submitted to
36 RIDEM for approval.

37 4. Animal testing shall be limited to the minimum number of animals required to
38 achieve valid scientific results when no alternatives exist.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 12

39 5. All approved animal research protocols and outcomes shall be publicly reported
40 and made accessible through RIDEM.

41 6. The State shall provide grants to universities and research institutions adopting
42 non-animal research methods, funded initially by existing RIDEM compliance
43 resources and subsequently supplemented by fines and penalties collected from
44 violations of this Act.

45 7. RIDEM shall conduct periodic inspections of facilities conducting animal research
46 to ensure compliance with this Act and may impose fines, suspend licenses, or
47 revoke approval for violations.

48 **Justification:** Animal testing in the United States affects millions of animals every
49 year. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, over 780,000 animals are
50 used annually in research that falls under federal oversight, and this number
51 excludes rats, mice, and birds, which make up the majority of research animals.
52 Many studies have shown that non-animal alternatives, such as computer modeling,
53 organ-on-a-chip technology, and cell cultures, can produce more accurate, cost-
54 effective results while avoiding unnecessary suffering. By requiring independent
55 review and RIDEM approval before conducting any animal testing, this bill ensures
56 that Rhode Island only permits animal research when absolutely necessary,
57 promoting ethical practices and more effective science.

58 This bill directly affects research institutions, laboratories, and universities in Rhode
59 Island, as well as the animals used in testing. Residents of Rhode Island will benefit
60 from increased transparency in research and the promotion of humane alternatives,
61 which also reduces long-term research costs. By providing grants to institutions
62 adopting non-animal methods and using fines to fund education and enforcement,
63 this bill creates a sustainable and cost-effective system for improving animal
64 welfare.

65 **Fiscal Implications:** This bill is designed to be cost-neutral for the State of Rhode
66 Island. By reallocating existing funds from RIDEM's Laboratory Animal Compliance
67 Program and using fines collected from violations, the bill can fund inspections,
68 grants for humane research alternatives, and educational programs without
69 requiring additional taxpayer money. Studies have shown that non-animal research
70 methods, such as computer modeling and cell cultures, can reduce research costs
71 by up to 30–50% compared to traditional animal testing, creating long-term
72 savings for institutions and the state. Overall, the financial impact is minimal while
73 generating sustainable funding for enforcement and innovation in humane research.

74 **Environmental Implications:** This bill has positive environmental implications by
75 reducing the use of live animals in research, which decreases the environmental



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 12

76 footprint associated with animal housing, waste management, and resource
77 consumption. Facilities that adopt non-animal alternatives, such as computer
78 modeling or cell culture systems, require less water, energy, and space, leading to
79 a smaller ecological impact. Additionally, improved animal welfare and ethical
80 research practices contribute to overall sustainability and responsible scientific
81 advancement in Rhode Island.

82 **Effective Date:** This bill will go into effect January 1st 2027.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 13

1 **Sponsors:** Nicholas Healey and Alexandra Lopes

2 **An Act To:** Require the Department of Labor and Training to add 2 weeks to
3 Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) and Unemployment Insurance (UI), along
4 with low-cost therapy and doctors' appointments, provided by the state to help
5 those with these struggles.

6 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

7 **Purpose:** TDI is meant to support people and families who can't support
8 themselves due to medical reasons, and UI is meant to support people experiencing
9 involuntary unemployment. However, they do not do a good enough job when
10 helping others. They both have complicated processes that harm many families in
11 their systems. For instance, it takes too long for the original payments to be given;
12 both TDI and UI are randomly cut, constantly require new doctors' notes every few
13 weeks, and are always slow on payments. A lot of people spend more money trying
14 to get TDI or UI than they'd receive when on it, so after a certain point, it's not
15 worth it.

16 **Summary of Provisions**

17 Section 1: Definitions

18 TDI- Temporary Disability Insurance: A program that provides partial wage
19 replacement for non-work-related illnesses, injuries, and pregnancies.

20 UI- Unemployment Insurance: A program that provides temporary, partial wage
21 replacement to workers who become unemployed through no fault of their own. Ex)
22 Layoffs

23 Section 2: Provisions

24 1. The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training will be required to extend
25 the time period in which someone shall receive TDI from 30 weeks to 52 weeks,
26 which is equivalent to 1 year.

27 2. The Department of Labor and Training will be required to cover 70%.

28 **Justification:** People who require TDI and UI receive very minimal pay, which is
29 4.62% of their wages from their highest-earning quarter in the base period. The
30 maximum you can receive is \$1,489 per week for 8 weeks. This is a maximum of
31 \$11,812. The average American makes between \$9,600-\$12,000 in an 8-week
32 period of time. Once these 8 weeks are over you can reapply for another 8 weeks,
33 for a max of 30 weeks. That is \$44,670, while the average American receives
34 \$35,000-\$38,00. After 30 weeks, you will receive no more payments. The average
35 American person spends \$44,000-\$55,000 yearly on essentials.

36 **Fiscal Implications:** Approximately 35,000 people receive Temporary Disability
37 Insurance (TDI) benefits in Rhode Island each year. About half receive benefits for



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 13

38 the full duration of 30 weeks. The other half receives benefits for a much shorter
39 period, averaging around 4 weeks.

40 If the maximum duration is changed to 40 weeks, the maximum benefit per
41 recipient would increase to approximately \$59,560. Knowing that only half of the
42 recipients receive the maximum benefit, and that the remaining recipients receive a
43 lower benefit of approximately \$5,956. The total estimated cost of the program
44 would be about \$1.14653 billion.

45 When compared to Rhode Island's annual healthcare budget of \$9 billion and only
46 around \$7.5 billion being used, the increase indicates that extending TDI benefits to
47 40 weeks would remain manageable within the state's healthcare costs.

48 **Effective Date:** This bill will go into effect on September 1st, 2026



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 14

1 **Sponsors:** Aaron Chellel

2 **An Act To:** Improve Road Safety via An Expansion For Road Sign Understanding

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** The purpose of this bill is to ensure that all Rhode Islanders can properly
5 understand important road signs while driving, improving safety and understanding.

6 **Summary of Provisions**

7 **Section 1: Definitions**

8 Warning Signs shall refer to signs designated under this classification in the Manual
9 Standard Highway Signs 2004 Edition 2012 Supplement.

10 Temporary Traffic Control Signs shall refer to signs designated under this
11 classification in the Manual Standard Highway Signs 2004 Edition 2012 Supplement.

12 Regulatory Signs shall refer to signs designated under this classification in the
13 Manual Standard Highway Signs 2004 Edition 2012 Supplement.

14 School Signs shall refer to signs designated under this classification in the Manual
15 Standard Highway Signs 2004 Edition 2012 Supplement.

16 Traffic Incident Management Area Signs shall refer to signs designated under this
17 classification in the Publication United States Road Simple Signs.

18 Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices shall refer to the Manual created by the
19 United States Department of Transportation.

20 Manual de Rotulación para las Vías Públicas de Puerto Rico shall refer to the Manual
21 created by the Puerto Rico Department of Transportation and Public Works.

22 Applicability shall refer to if road signs have writing/words on them.

23 **Section 2: Provisions**

24 1. The State of Rhode Island, via the Rhode Island Department of Transportation,
25 shall purchase and install new road signs that are printed in both the English and
26 Spanish languages.

27 a. The following road signs shall be replaced: Warning Signs; Temporary Traffic
28 Control Signs; Regulatory Signs; School Signs; Traffic Incident Management Area
29 Signs.

30 2. New sign designs shall be manufactured by the Rhode Island Department of
31 Transportation, using the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and
32 the Manual de Rotulación para las Vías Públicas de Puerto Rico, or the Sign Manual
33 for the Public Roads of Puerto Rico.

34 3. Only signs with applicability shall be replaced under the provisions of this bill.

35 **Justification:** The State of Rhode Island has a largely growing diverse population,
36 which consists highly of Hispanic/Latino people. With 22% of Rhode Islanders
37 speaking a language other than English at home, the largest language is Spanish,
38 with 52%. As of 2022, 17.1% of Rhode Islanders identify as Hispanic/Latino, and



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 14

39 this community has seen the highest rate of growth amongst other groups in the
40 state, at 44%. In order to ensure that all Rhode Islanders have the ability to fully
41 understand road signs, having road signs printed in both English and Spanish is
42 important. Understanding of road signs will be very important for the improvement
43 of road safety, especially in Rhode Island, where our state is often seen as difficult
44 and dangerous to drive in. Improving understanding while driving will assist in the
45 push towards making driving safer and easier in the state.

46 **Fiscal Implications:** Allocation of \$75 Million YEARLY

47 - From FY2026 / Transportation / Capital Purchases and Equipment

48 **Effective Date:** Effective upon passage.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 15

1 **Sponsors:** Alexandra Martinez

2 **An Act To:** Establish a limited-access animal abuse offender registry in the State of
3 Rhode Island

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** This bill will prevent individuals convicted of serious animal cruelty
6 offenses from possessing or obtaining animals by creating a confidential animal
7 abuse offender registry. This bill seeks to reduce repeat offenses, improve animal
8 safety, and support shelters and law enforcement in reliable and responsible animal
9 placement.

10 **Summary of Provisions**

11 Section 1: Definitions

12 Animal Abuse: Causing unnecessary pain, suffering, or death to an animal through
13 intentional abuse or by failing to provide basic necessities like food, water, shelter,
14 and veterinary care.

15 Animal Abuse Offender: An individual convicted of felony animal cruelty or at least
16 two misdemeanor animal cruelty offenses under Rhode Island law.

17 Registry: A system for keeping official records- The Rhode Island Animal Abuse
18 Offender Registry established under this act.

19 Authorized Entity: The individuals who have approval to access- Licensed animal
20 shelters, animal rescues, licensed breeders, animal control officers, and law
21 enforcement agencies.

22 Section 2: Provisions

23 (a) The State of Rhode Island shall establish and maintain a limited-access Animal
24 Abuse Offender Registry administered by a designated state agency.

25 (b) Any individual convicted of a felony animal cruelty offense, any Animal Abuse
26 Offender, as defined in Section 1, shall be placed on the registry upon sentencing.

27 (c) Individuals convicted of misdemeanor offenses shall remain on the registry for
28 five (5) years following completion of their sentence. Individuals convicted of felony
29 offenses shall remain on the registry for ten (10) years following completion of their
30 sentence.

31 (d) The registry shall not be publicly accessible and shall be available only to
32 authorized entities, including licensed animal shelters, licensed animal rescues,
33 licensed breeders, animal control officers, and law enforcement agencies, for the
34 purpose of screening potential animal adoptions or transfers.

35 (e) Individuals listed on the registry shall be prohibited from adopting, purchasing,
36 or otherwise obtaining ownership or custody of an animal during their period of
37 registration.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 15

38 (f) Any person who knowingly violates the provisions of this section shall be guilty
39 of a misdemeanor offense punishable by fines and/or imprisonment as determined
40 under Rhode Island law.

41 **Justification:** Animal cruelty is a serious and often repeated offence, and studies
42 have shown that individuals who abuse animals are significantly more likely to
43 commit future acts of violence, including domestic abuse. Research from numerous
44 national animal welfare organizations indicate that over 75% of individuals charged
45 with animal cruelty have prior criminal histories, demonstrating the need for
46 preventative measures. Currently, Rhode Island does not provide shelters or
47 rescues with a reliable way to identify individuals convicted of serious animal abuse,
48 which can result in animals being unknowingly placed in unsafe situations. This
49 registry will be directly available to animal shelters, rescues, breeders, and law
50 enforcement, allowing them to safely determine the placement of animals. The
51 people of Rhode Island would benefit from improved public safety, reduced strain
52 on shelters, and stronger protections for animals. Animals themselves would be the
53 primary beneficiaries, as this registry would help ensure that they are placed in safe
54 and responsible homes. By preventing repeat offenses, this bill promotes
55 responsible animal ownership and protects the well-being of communities across
56 the state.

57 **Fiscal Implications:** The registry may be administered by an existing state agency
58 using current resources/digital infrastructure. Any administrative costs would be
59 offset by reduced animal cruelty investigations and shelter expenses resulting from
60 repeat abuse.

61 **Environmental Implications:** By preventing animal neglect and abuse, this bill
62 promotes responsible animal ownership and improves the overall animal
63 welfare. Healthier animal populations reduce strain on shelters and can contribute
64 positively to community and environmental well-being.

65 **Effective Date:** This bill will go into effect immediately after its passage.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 16

1 **Sponsors:** Tomas Fernandes

2 **An Act To:** This Act is intended to reduce corruption, limit improper influence in
3 state government, and strengthen transparency and accountability in public office.
4 It focuses on reducing the influence of lobbyists, limiting the Governor’s pardon
5 power in cases involving conflicts of interest, and restricting the acceptance of
6 valuable gifts by state officials. In addition, it aims to limit campaign donations
7 from corporations and special interest groups that may attempt to control political
8 decisions. The goal is to ensure that government officials serve the public interest
9 rather than private or foreign interests. This Act promotes ethical leadership, fair
10 policymaking, and public trust in state institutions.

11 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

12 **Purpose:** The purpose of this bill is to prevent corruption and protect the integrity
13 of state government. It addresses growing concerns about political influence from
14 lobbyists and corporations that may shape laws for their own benefit. By setting
15 limits on gifts and campaign donations, the bill seeks to reduce conflicts of interest
16 among elected officials. It also creates reasonable limits on the Governor’s ability to
17 issue pardons to close family members or business associates.

18 These measures help ensure that decisions are made in the best interest of
19 residents rather than outside groups. Overall, the bill is designed to strengthen
20 public trust and accountability in state leadership.

21 **Summary of Provisions**

22 **Section 1: Definitions**

23 It explains what is meant by “lobbyist,” “gift,” and “campaign contribution.” It also
24 defines who qualifies as an immediate family member and what counts as a
25 business relationship with the Governor. The section clarifies which institutions are
26 considered public universities under the law. In addition, it outlines what types of
27 research may be considered sensitive or related to security. These definitions help
28 prevent confusion and make enforcement of the law more effective. By clearly
29 defining terms, the bill ensures that all individuals and organizations understand
30 their responsibilities and limits.

31 **Section 2: Provisions**

32 It prohibits lobbyists and foreign-controlled groups from influencing state legislation
33 related to public safety, infrastructure, and security. It limits the value of gifts that
34 the Governor and state lawmakers can accept to prevent favoritism or bribery. It
35 also restricts the Governor from pardoning close family members or individuals with
36 whom they had recent business ties. The bill also limits campaign contributions
37 from corporations and special interest groups to reduce political pressure. These
38 rules are intended to create a fairer and more transparent system of government.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 16

39 **Justification:** This bill is justified because public confidence in government
40 depends on honesty, fairness, and transparency. When elected officials receive
41 large gifts or campaign funding from powerful groups, people may believe decisions
42 are being made for the wrong reasons. Limiting these influences helps protect the
43 democratic process and ensures that leaders represent the people rather than
44 special interests. Restrictions on pardons prevent conflicts of interest and ensure
45 that justice is applied fairly. These measures work together to reduce corruption
46 and promote ethical leadership. By setting clear standards, the bill strengthens the
47 relationship between citizens and their government.

48 **Fiscal Implications:** This bill does not require the creation of new agencies or
49 major government programs. Enforcement will be handled by existing state
50 departments, such as the State Department of Justice and the State Ethics
51 Commission. Because of this, the financial cost to the state will be minimal. Most of
52 the responsibilities involve monitoring, reporting, and enforcing rules that already
53 fall within current agency duties.

54 **Environmental Implications:** This bill has little direct impact on the environment.
55 Its main focus is government ethics, transparency, and preventing corruption rather
56 than environmental policy. However, by reducing improper influence from special
57 interest groups, it may indirectly support more responsible decision-making in
58 areas like land use, infrastructure, and public projects.

59 **Effective Date:** This Act shall take effect six months after it is signed into law. This
60 time allows state agencies, and public officials to understand and prepare for the
61 new requirements. It also provides time to set up reporting systems and inform
62 affected groups of the new rules. Training and guidance can be provided during this
63 period to ensure smooth implementation. A delayed effective date helps prevent
64 confusion and ensures fairness. After six months, all provisions of the Act will be
65 fully enforceable. This timeline balances preparation with the need for reform.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 17

1 **Sponsors:** Parker Murray

2 **An Act To:** Institute a new disciplinary action in public high schools to complete
3 hours of community service in place of detention.

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** The purpose of this bill is to create a healthier and rehabilitated
6 educational environment. It will better the community in ways that other kinds of
7 community service do, but it will also rehabilitate children who are repeatedly
8 getting detentions. The result of this new change would give students the choice to
9 have detention or do good for their community.

10 **Summary of Provisions**

11 Section 1: Definitions

12 Community service- unpaid work benefiting ones community

13 Section 2: Provisions

14 If this bill is enacted all public schools will have to give the student a choice of
15 either a predetermined amount of hours of detention or a lesser amount of hours of
16 community service. This lesser amount of time would be determined by the staff in
17 charge of registering the detention. The community service would be served in a
18 predetermined way to better help the community overall. This could include, but
19 not limited to, helping at a soup kitchen, being involved in a local clean up, or
20 tutoring younger students. The student will have to turn in a form with a signature
21 of the community service manager/overseer's signature in confirmation they
22 completed the service.

23 **Justification:** Professionals in the academic field have conducted studies proving
24 that normal detention systems in public schools do not actually rehabilitate
25 students. Most students grow a tolerance for detention after multiple visits. In
26 contrast, community service shows kids that they can better their communities and
27 help people opposed to the behavior that got them into detention. Even if it does
28 not result in the rehabilitation of the students, it still contributes to the good of the
29 community.

30 **Fiscal Implications:** No major fiscal implications. Training for teachers supplied by
31 district. Minimal cost.

32 **Environmental Implications:** Positive emotional environment in schools due to
33 more helpful environment. No physical environmental implications.

34 **Effective Date:** The beginning of the 2027-28 school year, late August- early
35 September depending on the school.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 18

1 **Sponsors:** Marion Boyd

2 **An Act To:** Elder Financial Literacy and Legal Assistance Act. An Act to require the
3 Government to provide a program. The program would provide legal assistance to
4 people in the state of RI, 65 years old and above, free of charge. This would help
5 older adults understand their financial rights and choices. A strong program would
6 reduce fraud and financial abuse. This would support the independence and
7 financial security of older adults

8 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

9 **Purpose:** The purpose of this act is to create a state-run program that will provide
10 free legal assistance and financial literacy to residents of Rhode Island who are 65
11 years and older. This program will help older adults understand their financial rights
12 and help them make informed financial decisions. By offering education and legal
13 guidance on their legal papers. The program aims to reduce financial Fraud scams
14 and abuse targeting elders. The act supports the independence, dignity, and
15 financial security of Elder adults across the state.

16 **Summary of Provisions**

17 Section 1: Definitions

18 Communication workers - workers who would help with taking phone calls, making
19 appointments, general jobs of a secretary, and would be managing the hotline.

20 Pro bono - performing legal work without getting paid.

21 Older adults/ Elder adults - an Adult at the age of 65 or older.

22 Financial literacy -The ability to understand and manage money.

23 Administrative agency - the organization issued by the government that is
24 responsible and qualified for running the Elder Financial Literacy and Legal
25 Assistance Act.

26 Qualified provider - a person running the organization who meets the standard
27 requirements for the job

28 Plain language - clear, simple wording that is easy to comprehend, and is still
29 informative

30 Locations - the physical place where the legal action team with be divided up and
31 will work

32 Legal assistance- help provided by lawyers ot trained legal professionals to explain
33 rights and give advice.

34 Legal papers - papers an older adult deals with: wills, living will ,health care, bills,
35 directives, trusts, social security documents, housing, mortgage, debt, and financial
36 agreements, and beneficiaries

37 Section 2: Provisions The state will establish the Elder Financial Literacy and Legal
38 Assistance Program to provide free legal and financial education services to Rhode



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 18

39 Island residents 65 and older. The Program will focus on Financial rights fraud
40 prevention and legal assistance related to financial matters. The administering
41 agency would seek and accept federal funds, grants, and private donations to
42 support the program. The estimated annual cost of the program shall range from 1
43 million to 3 million dollars. The program shall employ at least ten licensed attorneys
44 across three locations in Rhode Island, along with two communication workers at
45 each location. Offices would be open three days a week from 9 am to 5 pm, and
46 attorneys would be compensated with a part-time salary and would not serve on a
47 pro bono basis. The eligible participants shall receive free, one-on-one legal
48 consultation related to a financial matter. The services would include explanations
49 of Financial and legal documents, financial literacy workshops, individual
50 counseling, fraud and scam education, prevention support, and referral to
51 specialized legal services when needed. The program would be promoted through
52 churches, community centers nursing homes, hospitals, advertisements, and
53 community events. The agency shall host one to two outreach events each year.
54 Appointments may be scheduled through walk-ins, telephone bookings, or the
55 official website. A hotline and virtual services shall also be available for elders who
56 are able to use technology. The Administering agency would establish program
57 guidelines, provider standards, and reporting requirements. AN annual report would
58 be produced, with details of the number of individuals served, types of services
59 provided, geographic coverage, trends in elder financial exploitation, budget usage,
60 and recommendations for program improvement. All services provided under the
61 Elder Financial Literacy and Legal Assistance Act shall be free of charge. The
62 providers shall be prohibited from selling or marketing financial services or products
63 to any participant. Educational materials would be evidence-based and written in
64 plain language. Reasonable accommodations shall be made for individuals with
65 disabilities or limited English proficiency.

66 **Justification:** Older Adults are frequently targeted for financial scams, fraud,
67 exploitation, and a lack of understanding. Many experience issues and difficulty
68 establishing wills, trusts, beneficiaries, and other legal documents. A 2023
69 Caring.com survey showed that only 46% of households over 55 have a will. Many
70 find the process too complex and overwhelming, or feel they don't have the money
71 to get help. This act ensures that elders in Rhode Island receive trusted, free
72 support to protect their finances, understand legal documents, and maintain
73 independence. while preventing abuse and providing assistance can help build up a
74 stronger community in Rhode Island.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 18

75 **Fiscal Implications:** The estimated cost of this program ranges from 1 to 3
76 million. Funding for this bill will be obtained through federal funds, grants, and
77 private donations.

78 **Effective Date:** January 1st 2028



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 19

1 **Sponsors:** Hayden Gill

2 **An Act To:** Establish an Expedited Calendar in the Courts to Address Particular Civil
3 Cases

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** The court shall establish a virtual calendar to assist litigants without the
6 necessity of in-person appearance. The virtual calendar would be established by the
7 chief judge of the court and would be by zoom with rules established by the court.
8 Court personnel could identify and suggest this option or attorneys or litigants could
9 request it. The chief judge would decide if the matter should be placed on this
10 virtual calendar.

11 **Summary of Provisions**

12 **Section 1: Definitions**

13 **Virtual Calendar:** The list of cases heard over a video sight such as zoom.

14 **Litigants:** Those attending court seeking relief

15 **The Chief Judge:** The head of the court.

16 **Civil Court:** The branch of the judicial system that does not involve the government,
17 non criminal matters.

18 **Contested:** Matters where parties are not in agreement

19 **Section 2: Provisions**

20 A virtual calendar with a list of cases heard over zoom would be established by the
21 chief judge. A person's case would be added to the calendar when court personnel
22 identify this as an option for uncontested civil cases or when litigants/attorneys
23 request it. The chief judge would decide if the matter should be placed on the
24 virtual calendar.

25 **Justification:** This would prevent backlog in the civil courts and expedite matters
26 by allowing sheriffs and other court personnel to assist in other in-person calendars
27 where matters are contested, thereby helping address any shortage of sheriffs or
28 personnel. It provides more access to the courts and makes it more convenient for
29 citizens in need of a trial.

30 **Fiscal Implications:** There are no fiscal implications of this bill.

31 **Environmental Implications:** By creating a virtual calendar, trials can be heard
32 at home and the courts will be less overwhelmed. The shortage of sheriffs will be
33 addressed because less sheriffs will have to appear in-person. Backlog in the civil
34 courts will be prevented.

35 **Effective Date:** This bill will take effect one year after passing.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 20

1 **Sponsors:** Evan Reineke

2 **An Act To:** Create a System of State-Owned Grocery Stores in Rhode Island

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** This bill will create a State-Owned Enterprise that will set up and run
5 several grocery stores around the State of Rhode Island. This enterprise is
6 established explicitly to increase the well-being of the public and to further the
7 social aims of the government of the State of Rhode Island, namely, reducing food
8 deserts, lowering the cost of living, providing healthy food options to the citizens of
9 Rhode Island, and providing revenue for the State. These stores will initially be
10 funded by a revenue bond, meaning the State will not have to take on a
11 burdensome initial investment.

12 **Summary of Provisions**

13 **Section 1: Definitions**

14 A state-owned enterprise shall refer to a business entity created and owned by a
15 specific government that takes orders or directives for goals for the business from
16 that government. These orders are usually oriented toward the social or financial
17 goals of the government.

18 A food desert shall refer to a census-designated geographic area with limited access
19 to affordable or nutritious food. These areas are commonly low-income and lack
20 sufficient means of transportation to healthy food options. A town or census tract
21 shall be defined as a food desert if more than 20% of its population lives under the
22 poverty line and if more than 1/3 of the population lives more than a mile (or more
23 than 10 miles for rural areas) from the nearest supermarket or large grocery store.

24 A grocery store shall refer to any business that sells food, food ingredients, and/or
25 small household goods as its primary focus of business.

26 The poverty line refers to values defined in the Federal Poverty Line Guidelines, in
27 which a single-person household is defined as having an income less than \$15,960
28 a year. Each subsequent person added to the household adds \$5,680 to that total.

29 A revenue bond shall refer to the type of government bond by which the repayment
30 of the investment is guaranteed by the operating revenues of the construction that
31 it funds. Revenue bonds do not need to be voted on by the general public.

32 **Section 2: Provisions**

33 1. A \$5 million revenue bond shall be instituted for the creation of a state-owned
34 enterprise that will own and operate a chain of grocery stores in the State of Rhode
35 Island.

36 2. A committee comprised of 7 individuals shall be created to oversee the creation,
37 management, and operation of the stores and their finances.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 20

38 a. The members of this committee shall be chosen by the Governor and
39 approved by the House of Representatives and Senate of Rhode Island, by a
40 majority vote of both chambers.

41 i. These members shall, whenever possible and reasonable, be representative
42 of the communities in which the stores will exist. Some members of the committee
43 should be economic experts whose training and experience will allow them to aid in
44 the success of the state-owned enterprise, and others should be experts on health
45 and nutrition.

46 ii. The committee shall elect a chairperson when they meet for the first time.
47 This is the individual who shall be the primary leader of the committee, and who
48 will be primarily responsible for the hearings the committee holds with the public
49 and with the Government of Rhode Island.

50 iii. The members of the committee serve two-year terms and may serve up to
51 4 terms consecutively.

52 iv. The members of this committee may be impeached by the regular
53 procedures of the impeachment of government officials, as described in Article XI of
54 the Rhode Island Constitution. They may be impeached for gross misconduct, abuse
55 of position, corruption, gross mismanagement, or any other crime committed while
56 on the committee.

57 b. The members of the committee shall be paid a reasonable sum, such as that
58 of the other members of departments within the Government of Rhode Island.

59 c. This committee shall arrange for the creation of new locations for the grocery
60 stores of the state-owned enterprise. Each store will have a manager who is
61 appointed by, and answers to, this committee. The store manager will run the day-
62 to-day operations of each store.

63 i. The operations of each store shall be adjusted to best match the needs of
64 the community in which it is placed. The committee and manager of each store are
65 directed to carry out this responsibility.

66 ii. Prior to the fulfillment of the revenue bond, the committee will meet to plan
67 the locations, branding, inventory, staffing, and management of the future stores.

68 iii. The committee may buy, rent, or order the construction of stores as they
69 see fit.

70 iv. The committee is authorized to perform dealings, create contracts, and
71 perform transactions with private entities in order to effectuate the creation,
72 supply, and operation of the stores. For example, the committee is responsible for
73 making contracts with local food providers and manufacturers to purchase food to
74 sell in the stores.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 20

75 d. The committee controls the financial affairs of the state-owned enterprise.

76 i. There shall be a treasury created to act as a treasury for the state-owned
77 enterprise. This treasury will be independent of the General Treasury of the state.

78 ii. The members of the committee are not paid from these funds, but rather
79 from the funds of the General Treasury. The members of the committee cannot
80 choose to raise their pay or pay themselves using money from the enterprise.

81 iii. Payment for store employees and store management shall be paid from
82 the treasury of the state-owned enterprise.

83 e. The goal of this committee, and of the enterprise as a whole, is to improve the
84 lives of those in the State of Rhode Island.

85 i. To this end, the committee is directed to operate the state-owned enterprise
86 toward five goals: Lowering the cost of groceries, providing healthy food options,
87 reducing food deserts, provide revenue for the State, and provide a good and
88 livable wage and benefits to employees of the state-owned enterprise

89 ii. While applicable, paying off the revenue bond used to create the system
90 will also be a goal of the enterprise.

91 iii. The committee will regularly hear from people in communities across the
92 State on the issue of food access, food affordability, and on the general functioning
93 of the stores under the purview of the committee. They are instructed to attempt to
94 use any constructive criticism to improve the stores or state-owned enterprise as
95 they see fit. A hearing of this variety must be held at least once a year, but they
96 may be held more often if the Committee or the House of Representatives and
97 Senate of Rhode Island call for it.

98 f. The committee shall provide a quarterly report to the Government of Rhode
99 Island on the functioning of the committee and the chain of grocery stores it
100 controls. This report will discuss the financial status of the enterprise as well as the
101 state of its 5 goals. While applicable, it will also discuss the efforts the committee
102 has made to pay off the revenue bond used to initially create the stores. This report
103 shall be presented to the House of Representatives and Senate of Rhode Island in a
104 joint session.

105 3. There shall be no taxes on any transactions at the stores of this state-owned
106 enterprise.

107 **Justification:** Through the creation of a state-owned grocery chain, the state will
108 be able to solve numerous issues within the state, with little cost to the state. The
109 quality of services and goods provided at these stores will always be better than
110 what can be provided by the private sector. The fact that the state-owned chain
111 does not have to worry about profitability beyond what is necessary to break even,



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 20

112 and the lack of taxes on purchases, means that prices can be significantly lower at
113 these stores than at regular, privately owned stores. This could alternatively allow
114 for healthier or higher-quality goods to be sold for a similar price to regular-quality
115 goods at a privately-owned store. Thus, this system of grocery stores will
116 significantly aid in reaching governmental objectives for human development and
117 well-being within the state, such as addressing the lack of affordable, healthy food
118 and food deserts. The stores will be operated logically, in order to maximize the
119 societal benefit from their operation, without being severely beholden to the need
120 to generate a profit, as privately-owned stores are.

121 A chain of grocery stores operating in the state will also provide healthy
122 competition to privately-owned stores, and prevent them from majorly exploiting
123 their customers. Private stores will have to compete with the example set by these
124 government-owned stores, whose goal is ultimately for the common good. A chain
125 of publicly owned and operated stores will prevent monopolies and prevent the
126 extraction of the wealth of Rhode Islanders to out-of-state megacorporations. If the
127 government has the ability to provide a better service to the consumer but chooses
128 not to in order to defend the profits of private businesses, it effectively means that
129 the government is giving a subsidy to businesses at the direct expense of the
130 average consumer.

131 **Fiscal Implications:** Groceries will become more affordable for the average
132 person. The State will have more revenue, as profits from these grocery stores can
133 be added to the treasury. Some pre-existing grocery stores may lose some money
134 due to competition with the state-owned grocery stores. There will be more jobs in
135 the State, as employees are needed to operate and supply the stores.

136 **Environmental Implications:** There will be minimal change to the physical
137 environment as a result of this bill. The social environment will be improved, since
138 there will be more healthy and affordable food available to the citizens of the State.

139 **Effective Date:** The committee will be appointed as soon as reasonably possible
140 and will begin researching potential locations for stores and reaching out to food
141 suppliers to negotiate contracts. Once the bond has been fully raised, the
142 arrangements that the committee will have had made to create the stores will be
143 put into effect at the beginning of the next fiscal year following the fulfillment of the
144 bond.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 21

1 **Sponsors:** Landon Lafrenaye, Hayden Anderson, Skylar Bertenshaw, and Jake
2 Gregson

3 **An Act To:** Implement a Firearms Records Division in Rhode Island

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** Create a statewide registry of firearms to prevent further gun violence in
6 Rhode Island.

7 **Summary of Provisions**

8 Section 1: Definitions

9 Manufacturing refers to the creation of firearms from raw materials with the
10 intention to use or sell.

11 Assembly refers to the combining of finished parts to create firearms with the
12 intention to use or sell.

13 New resident refers to a person who has established a permanent residence in
14 Rhode Island within the previous 183 days.

15 Negligence refers to the failure to exercise reasonable care which a reasonable
16 person would use under similar circumstances.

17 Recklessness refers to the conscious disregard of a known and substantial risk.

18 Pattern or Practice refers to repeated conduct which shows consistent or systematic
19 violation.

20 Aggravated refers to intentional or malicious conduct or conduct which has resulted
21 in substantial harm.

22 Blue card refers to the permit to own a handgun in Rhode Island.

23 RLEO refers to the federal permit which allows concealed carry of a firearm for
24 qualified retired law enforcement officers.

25 LCCW refers to the License to Carry Concealed Weapons in Rhode Island, which is
26 required to carry a concealed handgun, either concealed or openly.

27 Section 2: Provisions

28 This bill aims to prevent further gun violence in Rhode Island and provide law
29 enforcement, and related fields, with a centralized database for gun ownership.

30 1. This Law repeals R.I Gen. Law § 11-47-41.

31 2. The Rhode Island Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation (BCI) shall
32 organize and maintain an electronic real time firearms registration system.

33 a. This system shall be referred to as the Firearms Records Division.

34 b. Any firearms possessed primarily in the State, manufactured, or assembled in
35 Rhode Island shall be registered with the State's Firearms Records Division.

36 i. The following information of the registrant shall be included in the
37 registration; Name, address, and contact information (email and/or telephone),
38 Permit information, including date issued (for blue card/RLEO permits), Carry



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 21

- 39 permit information, including date issued (LCCW), Type of firearm and date
40 acquired;
- 41 5. Name, address, and contact information of previous owner/seller (if
42 applicable);
- 43 6. Statement signed by the registrant which acknowledges and binds that
44 the information provided is not perjury, that they are licensed and permitted
45 properly, and are not prohibited from owning a firearm in the State.
- 46 ii. Registration shall occur at the time of;
- 47 1. Purchase;
- 48 2. Import;
- 49 3. Acquisition;
- 50 4. Manufacture;
- 51 5. or Assembly.
- 52 a. Sixty day exemptions shall be granted to and include;
- 53 i. New residents;
- 54 ii. Inheritance of firearms.
- 55 b. Seven day exemptions shall be granted to and include;
- 56 i. Licensed dealers, gunsmiths, distributors, or manufacturers
57 importing firearms;
- 58 ii. Privately-made firearms.
- 59 c. Reports of firearm transactions shall be given to the Firearms Records Division
60 within 7 days of the transaction, and at least one party related to the transaction
61 must report.
- 62 i. The report shall include the following information of the firearm;
- 63 1. Description;
- 64 2. Make;
- 65 3. Model;
- 66 4. Serial Number;
- 67 5. and Caliber.
- 68 d. Exemption to this section include the following;
- 69 i. If the firearm is property of the United States government;
- 70 ii. Produced by federally licensed manufacturer and not for sale in the State;
- 71 iii. If a firearm is being turned over to law enforcement solely for its
72 destruction;
- 73 iv. Firearms transported as merchandise by commercial carriers by authorized
74 employees of the company;
- 75 1. Must comply with current RI storage laws;



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 21

- 76 v. Non-residents lawfully traveling through the State;
77 1. Must comply with current RI storage laws.
78 e. Violations of this bill are the following;
79 i. Failure to register a firearm;
80 ii. Failure to report a transaction;
81 iii. Failure to report loss or theft of a firearm.
82 f. Penalties of the violations of Section 2.e. are the following;
83 i. First offense- fine up to \$1,000;
84 ii. Second offense- fine up to \$5,000, or imprisonment up to 6 months, or
85 both, and shall be considered a misdemeanor;
86 iii. Third of subsequent offenses- fine up to \$10,000, or imprisonment of 1-5
87 years, or both, and shall be considered a felony.
88 g. Privacy of the Firearms Records Division is restricted to law enforcement only.
89 i. The following entities shall be granted access to the Firearms Records
90 Division;
91 1. Rhode Island Department of Corrections;
92 2. Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (issuers of blue
93 cards);
94 3. Rhode Island Department of Public Safety;
95 a. All municipal police departments;
96 b. Rhode Island State Police;
97 c. Rhode Island Capitol Police;
98 d. Division of Sheriffs;
99 e. Office of the State Fire Marshal;
100 4. Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General;
101 a. Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation.
102 ii. Violations of the Firearms Records Division are as follows;
103 1. Accessing the records without a lawful, legitimate, or otherwise official
104 purpose;
105 2. Disclosure of the records to unauthorized persons;
106 3. Using the records for personal, political, or non-official motives;
107 4. Knowingly allowing another person to access or view the records
108 improperly.
109 iii. Penalties of the violations of Section 2.g.xvi are the following;
110 1. Negligence, a fine of not less than \$1,000 and not more than \$5,000;
111 2. Recklessness, a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment not more
112 than one year and a fine of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$50,000;



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 21

113 3. Pattern or practice, a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment not less
114 than one year and a fine of not less than \$50,000 and not more than \$250,000;

115 4. Aggravated, a felony punishable by imprisonment of not less than 5
116 years and not more than 15 years and/or a fine not less than \$50,000 and not
117 more than \$250,000.

118 3. The Rhode Island Firearms Records Division shall establish and be governed by
119 the Rhode Island Firearms Records Commission, hereby referred to as the
120 Commission.

121 a. Each member of the Commission shall serve a term of two years and may be
122 reappointed for additional terms; however, no member shall serve more than four
123 terms, otherwise eight years, in aggregate.

124 i. The quorum shall consist of the majority of the members.

125 ii. No member shall serve where they are compromised by financial, personal,
126 or political interest.

127 b. The Commission shall be comprised of the following appointments;

128 i. Director of the Firearms Records Division, appointed by the Governor, who
129 shall serve as chair;

130 ii. Attorney General or designee;

131 iii. One member appointed by the Speaker of the House with expertise in
132 firearm law or safety;

133 iv. One member appointed by the President of the Senate with expertise in
134 public safety or policy;

135 v. Three members appointed by the Governor who;

136 1. Represent law enforcement;

137 2. Represent firearm owners;

138 3. Represent civil rights or public safety interests.

139 vi. Technical firearms expert appointed by the Director of the Firearms
140 Records Division;

141 vii. One municipal licensing authority representative.

142 4. Records maintained by the Firearms Records Division shall not be disclosed for
143 use in criminal or civil proceedings except pursuant to a court-issued warrant, court
144 order, grand jury subpoena, or lawful administrative subpoena.

145 5. If any provisions or application of this Act is found to be invalid or
146 unconstitutional, it shall not affect the remainder of the provisions.

147 **Justification:** The Second Amendment is a powerful and humble amendment. It
148 arms the people of our nation in defense of both possible domestic and foreign
149 threats. Yet it has come with so much pain, destruction, and terror. We see often in



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 21

150 our times tragedies in our schools. Families left with lost children, brothers, and
151 sisters. And with a recent tragedy in our own State just three months ago, it seems
152 ever present the need for a safer community against the horrible acts that just
153 keep happening. A safer community is one without the thought of dying in the
154 classroom or hallways. Like the Dean at West Warwick says, "S.A.F.E., Schools Are
155 For Education." Not violence, not death, and not tragedy. I find, and liberals and
156 conservatives alike at my school, it is our right to have more than what our schools
157 have provided us with for protection against such threats. This is why I have
158 introduced, and believe wholeheartedly that a statewide registry is absolutely and
159 undoubtedly imperative for our safety as a community.

160 This bill is a compromise between the conservative right and the liberal left on the
161 issue of gun violence and control in Rhode Island. Second Amendment Rights are
162 not being compromised or infringed on gun owners and no restrictive laws of
163 ownership are being placed against them. A system which tracks who legally owns
164 firearms will help identify lost firearms and keep a record on their history and use.
165 This increases the safety of people of Rhode Island from gun violence while not
166 infringing on any person's Second Amendment Rights. Moreover, it will assist law
167 enforcement carry out their everyday duties.

168 **Fiscal Implications:** Annual funding of the Firearms Records Division shall be
169 requested through the Office of the Attorney General and appropriated by the
170 Rhode Island General Assembly.

171 **Effective Date:** Upon passage of this bill, there shall be granted a grace period of
172 two years until the enforcement of the contents of this bill shall be carried out.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 22

1 **Sponsors:** Jana Denise Madriaga and Cesar Gatica

2 **An Act To:** Require high school athletic teams to have reliable transportation
3 provided by their schools to and from athletic events.

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** To provide transportation to student athletes to and from their athletic
6 events. The distance of sporting events can vary from different schools, however,
7 when distance becomes lengthy, traveling can become unsafe. While carpooling can
8 be an option and students driving others to these events is certainly possible;
9 students can only do so much and have a certain amount of people in the car, thus
10 making it a risky drive. It is imperative that students are transported safely to the
11 locations of their sporting events to ensure that all students are given equal
12 opportunity at said events.

13 **Summary of Provisions**

14 **Section 2: Provisions**

15 All schools in Rhode Island shall provide their high school sports teams with
16 transportation to and from their athletic events when they are hosted away.

17 Schools must provide buses and bus drivers to transport teams to athletic events
18 regardless of the distance of the opposing team.

19 Students will still be granted the choice of whether or not they want to commute
20 there and back on their own.

21 Regardless of sport season or type of sport, or duration of event, transportation will
22 still be provided if needed. Unless transportation is absolutely unnecessary and is
23 communicated that it is not needed, transportation will not have to be provided.

24 **Justification:** This bill will help lessen the stress of transport for student athletes
25 during athletic events. More often than not, student athletes already have various
26 responsibilities attached to school work, extracurriculars, and home obligations.

27 Never should finding travel to athletic events be a priority of the students.

28 Therefore, it falls under the duties and obligations of the school systems,
29 thereunder the government, to provide transportation in order to better equip
30 student athletes.

31 **Fiscal Implications:** The funding for this bill will come from taxes, federal sources,
32 and government aid along with the help from the Rhode Island Interscholastic
33 League.

34 **Effective Date:** This bill will go into effect August 1, 2027 with all schools in Rhode
35 Island being required to provide their athletic teams with bus transportation.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 23

1 **Sponsors:** Ella Hitte and Collin Wilkins

2 **An Act To:** Pushback High School Start Times

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** To push back school start times for all elementary and secondary
5 educations in the state of Rhode Island

6 **Summary of Provisions**

7 Section 1: Definitions

8 RIDE shall refer to the Rhode Island Department of Education, the government
9 body responsible for overseeing elementary and secondary education in Rhode
10 Island.

11 Elementary education shall refer to schools that teach grades from pre-K to fifth
12 grade

13 Secondary education shall refer to schools that team from grades sixth through
14 eighth and ninth through twelfth grades.

15 Section 2: Provisions

16 1. High School start times will be pushed back to no earlier than 8:30 AM statewide
17 and school would end no earlier than 2:30 PM.

18 2. Middle School start times will remain in the middle of High School and
19 Elementary School at no earlier than 8:00 AM and end no earlier than 2:00.

20 3. Elementary Schools will begin earlier than High School and Middle Schools at no
21 earlier than 7:30 AM and end no earlier 1:30 PM and will in place afterschool care
22 for children whose parents are not off work early enough to pick them up.

23 4. This law shall pertain to all schools under the jurisdiction of the RIDE

24 **Justification:** This law is necessary because later start times for high school
25 students have been scientifically proven to improve their alertness and performance
26 in school. It is also scientifically proven that teenagers need more sleep than other
27 ages.

28 **Fiscal Implications:** 1. If a school does not adhere to the start time the school
29 shall be fined \$200 a day until the start time is adjusted to comply with the law

30 2. The fine shall not exceed \$200 a day

31 3. All funds collected from violations of the law shall go to funding the after school
32 care for elementary aged children

33 **Effective Date:** Law shall take effect on August 28th 2026



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 24

1 **Sponsors:** Jordan French

2 **An Act To:** Ensure Fiscal Responsibility for Rhode Island

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** Rhode Island's budget has grown dramatically. Total spending exceeded
5 \$13 billion in FY2023 (versus under \$10 billion in FY2019), driven by one-time
6 federal surpluses and relief funds. Health and Human Services now account for
7 roughly 45% of all state spending, with Medicaid surging from \$2.93 B in FY2019 to
8 \$4.90 B in FY2026, a 67.1% increase. Meanwhile infrastructure spending is large
9 but inefficient: Rhode Island ranks 42nd in the nation for highway cost-
10 effectiveness, and legislative audits have flagged millions in waste, e.g. \$3.1 M on
11 defective concrete barriers in a road project. This Act's purpose is to cap and cut
12 non-essential spending. Especially in Medicaid and transportation. To eliminate
13 wasteful programs, and streamline state departments, thereby creating room for
14 sustainable tax relief.

15 **Summary of Provisions**

16 **Section 1: Definitions**

17 **Health and Human Services (HHS):** The state executive office overseeing Medicaid
18 **and other health programs.**

19 **Medicaid Program:** The Rhode Island Medical Assistance program that provides
20 **health coverage for low-income residents.**

21 **Transportation Fund:** The state's highway fund (primarily gas-tax revenues)
22 **supporting RIDOT (roads/bridges) and RIPTA (public transit).**

23 **Wasteful Expenditure:** Any state spending identified by audit or analysis as
24 **unnecessary or inefficient (e.g. cost overruns, redundant programs).**

25 **Efficiency Audit:** An independent review of a department's operations and spending,
26 **as ordered by the General Assembly or state auditors.**

27 **Section 2: Provisions**

28 **Medicaid Spending Controls:** Caps annual Medicaid general-revenue increases to no
29 more than the inflation rate. Requires annual eligibility re-determination and
30 modest cost-sharing (premiums/co-pays) for able-bodied adults to reduce excess
31 enrollment.

32 **Infrastructure Reform:** All major RIDOT projects must undergo independent cost-
33 benefit review before approval. Reallocate 20% of the Highway Maintenance
34 Account to transit (per federal standard) and freeze any new toll contracts until
35 RIDOT completes a performance audit.

36 **Agency Budget Limits:** Impose a state hiring freeze and require each agency to
37 return unused appropriations to the general fund. All departments must cut
38 overhead by at least 5% relative to the prior year's base.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 24

39 Program Revitalization: Require the legislature to review and reauthorize major
40 "safety net" programs every 5 years; any program not explicitly continued is
41 automatically cut. All new welfare-style programs must be offset by equal savings.
42 Efficiency Audits: Direct the Auditor General or House Fiscal to conduct efficiency
43 audits of any department whose budget grows faster than revenues. Suspend
44 funding increases for programs flagged as failing basic performance metrics.
45 **Justification:** Medicaid Growth Is Unsustainable. Rhode Island's Medicaid
46 expenditures have surged without offsetting revenue. Total Medicaid outlays are
47 now \$4.90 B (FY2026), with the state's share \$1.82 B. This is up 67% since FY2019.
48 Even after the pandemic-era enrollment freeze ended, enrollment only fell modestly
49 (from 373,376 in FY2024 to 306,606 by year-end), so unchecked growth would
50 keep budget deficits growing. The state pays among the nation's lowest Medicaid
51 provider rates, yet costs keep rising; capping spending and enforcing eligibility is
52 needed to protect taxpayers. Health & Human Services Dominates the Budget as
53 well. HHS as a category now claims 45.2% of all funds and 38.8% of general
54 revenue, up from 42.3% (all funds) in FY2019. Together with education, these
55 consume nearly 75% of the budget. General revenue HHS spending alone grew
56 29.7% from FY2019 to FY2023. Without reforms, this outpacing of revenue growth
57 threatens fiscal stability.
58 Roads and Transit Have Inefficiencies as well. The state spends roughly \$1 B per
59 year on roads and bridges, but audits show poor value. Rhode Island ranked 42nd
60 nationwide in highway system cost-effectiveness. (By contrast, Rhode Island's
61 transit agency operates efficiently and has faced funding cuts.) For example, one
62 legislative analysis found \$3.1 M wasted on a 2008 bridge project's defective
63 concrete and \$1.34 M in unnecessary overtime. Shifting even a portion of highway
64 funds to proven needs (like transit) and enforcing competitive bidding could save
65 millions. High Overhead Spending: A recent report found Rhode Island's per-capita
66 spending on government administration is the highest in the U.S.. Small
67 jurisdictions and overlapping agencies drive up personnel and admin costs. State
68 and local government administration (planning, personnel, etc.) ranks 5th-highest
69 nationwide per capita.
70 Cutting bureaucracy for example by consolidating redundant offices and freezing
71 hiring – can significantly reduce the budget burden. People now have a reliance on
72 One-Time Funds. The FY2023 budget used \$877.5 M in surplus revenues and
73 \$1.24 B in federal COVID relief. Such one-time fixes will vanish, exposing a growing
74 structural deficit. In fact, RIPEC warns that without spending constraints, deficits



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: House Bill #: 24

75 will re-emerge as federal support wanes. This legislation proactively curtails
76 spending growth to prevent future tax hikes.

77 **Fiscal Implications:** The Act to Ensure Fiscal Responsibility would likely produce
78 substantial budget savings for Rhode Island in both the short and long term,
79 primarily by slowing the rapid growth of large spending areas such as Medicaid,
80 state agency operations, and transportation projects. In the first one to two years,
81 estimated annual savings could range from roughly \$200 million to \$475 million
82 after accounting for modest implementation costs for audits and eligibility reviews,
83 largely driven by caps on healthcare spending, a statewide hiring freeze, and
84 reductions in administrative overhead. Over three to five years, compounding
85 effects could raise savings to \$300 million to \$600 million annually, helping stabilize
86 the state's structural budget outlook and creating room for tax relief such as lower
87 income taxes, reduced fees, or property-tax support for municipalities. Long term,
88 the policy could slow debt growth and improve Rhode Island's borrowing conditions
89 with credit agencies like Moody's, S&P Global Ratings, and Fitch Ratings, potentially
90 reducing interest costs on state bonds. However, fiscal gains would involve trade-
91 offs, including possible reductions in healthcare access, increased uncompensated
92 hospital care, slower infrastructure expansion, heavier workloads for remaining
93 state employees, and the risk that underinvestment in services or maintenance
94 could create higher costs later. Overall, the measure would shift the state toward a
95 lower-spending, lower-tax model that strengthens budget predictability but accepts
96 diminished public services and safety-net support as a consequence.

97 **Environmental Implications:** No significant environmental impacts are expected.
98 This Act targets fiscal policies and does not authorize new construction or land-use
99 changes that would affect air, water, or wildlife.

100 **Effective Date:** This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 25

1 **Sponsors:** Eilidh Thomson and Hayden Kelley

2 **An Act To:** Rhode Island Homes for Residents Act

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** The purpose of this act is to preserve access to homeownership for
5 Rhode Island residents by limiting the acquisition of single-family homes by private
6 companies and speculative investors. This act seeks to address the growing
7 disconnect between household incomes and housing costs, protect the stability of
8 residential neighborhoods, and ensure that single-family homes are primarily used
9 as places to live rather than as financial assets. By prioritizing owner occupancy and
10 discouraging investment practices that reduce housing availability, this legislation
11 aims to support first-time homebuyers, young families, and long-term residents
12 seeking to remain in their communities. This act further intends to promote fair
13 competition in the housing market, strengthen community cohesion, and safeguard
14 the long-term economic and social well-being of the State of Rhode Island.

15 **Summary of Provisions**

16 **Section 1: Definitions**

17 Private company means any corporation, limited liability company, partnership, real
18 estate investment trust, business trust, joint venture, or other legal or commercial
19 entity, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, that is not a natural person, excluding
20 entities expressly exempted under Section 2 of this act.

21 Single-family home means a residential structure designed and intended for
22 occupancy by one household, including detached single-family dwellings and single-
23 family condominiums, but excluding multi-family dwellings, accessory dwelling
24 units, and mixed-use properties.

25 Ownership means legal title, equitable title, or beneficial ownership of real property,
26 whether held directly or indirectly.

27 Beneficial ownership means any interest, arrangement, or relationship through
28 which a person or entity exercises control, derives financial benefit, or holds the
29 right to control the disposition or use of a property, regardless of whether legal title
30 is held in another name.

31 Control means the power to direct or influence the management, use, leasing, sale,
32 or disposition of a property, whether through ownership interests, contractual
33 rights, management agreements, voting power, or other means.

34 Purchase or acquire includes, but is not limited to, any transaction resulting in
35 ownership or beneficial ownership of a single-family home, including direct
36 conveyances, assignments of contracts, mergers, consolidations, transfers of stock
37 or membership interests resulting in control, options, land contracts, or similar
38 arrangements.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 25

39 Qualified individual buyer means a natural person who purchases a single-family
40 home for use as their primary residence and occupies the property as such for a
41 minimum period established by regulation.

42 Primary residence means a dwelling in which a qualified individual buyer resides for
43 the majority of the calendar year and which is listed as such for tax, voting, and
44 legal purposes.

45 Affiliated entity means any entity that directly or indirectly controls, is controlled
46 by, or is under common control with another entity, including through shared
47 ownership, management, or contractual arrangements.

48 Substantial rehabilitation means construction, renovation, or improvement work
49 that materially upgrades the safety, habitability, or structural integrity of a single-
50 family home, as defined by regulations promulgated pursuant to this act.

51 Section 2: Provisions

52 No private company shall purchase, acquire, or obtain ownership of a single-family
53 home within the State of Rhode Island after the effective date of this act.

54 For purposes of this section, "purchase" or "acquire" shall include, but not be
55 limited to, direct conveyances, assignments of contracts, mergers, stock or
56 membership interest transfers resulting in control, options, land contracts, or any
57 transaction that results in ownership or beneficial ownership.

58 All single-family homes owned by private companies prior to the effective date of
59 this act shall be permitted to remain under such ownership, provided that said
60 properties are registered with the Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General
61 within one (1) year of enactment.

62 The following entities shall be exempt from the restrictions outlined in this section:

- 63 - Nonprofit housing organizations
- 64 - Community land trusts
- 65 - Housing cooperatives
- 66 - Affordable housing developers operating under deed-restricted affordability
67 agreements approved by the state
- 68 - State and municipal government entities, authorities, and agencies
- 69 - Financial institutions and mortgage lenders acquiring a single-family home
70 through foreclosure or a deed in lieu of foreclosure, provided that such institutions
71 divest the property to a qualified individual buyer or nonprofit housing organization
72 within twenty-four (24) months of acquisition
- 73 - Revocable or irrevocable trusts established for estate planning purposes, provided
74 that all trustees and beneficiaries are natural persons, no corporate entity holds any



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 25

75 beneficial interest or control, and no contractual arrangement exists granting a
76 private company financial or managerial control over the property
77 - Licensed residential construction and development companies acquiring property
78 for the explicit purpose of substantial rehabilitation or new construction, provided
79 that:

- 80 - A rehabilitation or construction plan is approved by the state,
- 81 - The property is not transferred to an affiliated entity, and
- 82 - The property is sold to a qualified buyer within thirty-six (36) months of
83 acquisition

84 For purposes of this section, a qualified individual buyer shall mean a natural
85 person who purchases the property for use as their primary residence and occupies
86 the property as such for a minimum period established by regulation.

87 Any transfer of ownership in violation of this section shall be deemed unlawful.

88 **Justification:** In June of 2025, the Rhode Island Association of Realtors reported
89 that the median price of a single-family home in the Ocean State had reached
90 \$520,000. To responsibly afford a home at this price under standard lending
91 guidelines, a household would need to earn approximately \$155,000–\$165,000 per
92 year. By contrast, the 2023 U.S. Census reported Rhode Island’s median household
93 income at just \$86,372, and recent estimates show little meaningful growth,
94 leaving the typical family earning far less than what is needed to purchase a
95 median-priced home.

96 Private companies are able to outcompete resident buyers by leveraging greater
97 capital, cash offers, and investment-driven strategies that drive prices higher and
98 reduce access to homeownership. As single-family homes are increasingly treated
99 as financial assets rather than places to live, Rhode Islanders (especially young
100 families and first-time buyers) are priced out and pushed to leave the state.

101 This body has a duty to the people of Rhode Island to ensure they can stay in the
102 communities they call home. This bill takes a bold, targeted approach by protecting
103 single-family homes for residents, strengthening neighborhoods, and confronting
104 the forces driving our housing crisis. It gives Rhode Islanders a real chance to build
105 their lives here, to grow their families, their wealth, and their futures rather than
106 being pushed out by speculative investors.

107 **Fiscal Implications:** The implementation of this act is expected to result in
108 minimal fiscal impact to the State of Rhode Island.

109 Administrative costs associated with enforcement, property registration, compliance
110 review, and adjudication of violations shall be absorbed within existing resources of



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 25

111 the Office of the Attorney General and other relevant state agencies, or offset
112 through civil fines imposed pursuant to Section 3 of this act.

113 This act does not require the creation of new state programs, the expansion of
114 existing benefit programs, or the appropriation of additional state funds. Any
115 revenues generated through fines or penalties shall be deposited in accordance with
116 applicable state law.

117 **Environmental Implications:** This act is expected to have no adverse
118 environmental impact. To the extent that the act encourages long-term residency,
119 community stability, and the rehabilitation of existing housing, it may contribute
120 indirectly to more sustainable land use and reduced environmental strain associated
121 with frequent property turnover and redevelopment.

122 **Effective Date:** January 1st, 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 26

1 **Sponsors:** Graham Franke, Jordan Burns, and Miles Dolan

2 **An Act To:** Restore the Newport Mansions and Bring a new meaning to these
3 Historical Buildings

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** The Newport mansions will be converted into one HBCU Campus, aiming
6 to expand cultural significance and address racial inequalities reflective in schools
7 present in New England.

8 **Summary of Provisions**

9 Section 1: Definitions

10 HBCU: Historically Black Colleges and Universities

11 Newport Mansions: a collection of 11 opulent, historic seaside estates in Newport,
12 Rhode Island, built as ""summer cottages"" for America's wealthiest families during
13 the Gilded Age (late 19th/early 20th century)

14 5.99% Tax Bracket: The highest personal income tax rate in Rhode Island is 5.99%
15 for the 2025 and 2026 tax years. This top marginal rate applies to taxable income
16 exceeding \$181,650 for 2025

17 Section 2: Provisions

18 The Newport mansions will be converted into one HBCU Campus, aiming to expand
19 cultural significance and address racial inequalities reflective in schools present in
20 New England. Paid for by an increase in taxes (.20 pull from taxes designated for
21 the project) from taxpayers in the Rhode Island 5.99% tax bracket, with all taxes
22 being reimbursed within the first year of enrollment to ensure the foundation of
23 funding, success, and trust.

24 **Justification:** The Newport Mansions stand as symbols of immense wealth built
25 during a time when Black Americans were systematically excluded from opportunity
26 and forced to endure exploitation, segregation, and economic hardship. While these
27 estates are often admired for their beauty and history, that history also includes the
28 labor and suffering of people who were denied the chance to share in the prosperity
29 their work helped create. Places like Newport, where Black residents contributed to
30 the local economy and culture, saw a large difference in accessibility. Rather than
31 continuing to celebrate these spaces without context, we should seek ways to
32 transform their legacy into one of acknowledgment, reinvestment, and repair by
33 directing resources, educational opportunities, and economic support toward Black
34 communities whose growth and stability were historically undermined.

35 **Fiscal Implications:** Initial funding for the establishment of the Newport HBCU will
36 be generated through a temporary 0.20% tax increase applied exclusively to
37 individuals within the 5.99% income tax bracket. These funds will be restricted



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 26

38 solely to campus startup costs, including staffing, academic resources, technology,
39 and student services.

40 **Environmental Implications:** This bill prioritizes environmental sustainability by
41 repurposing existing historic structures rather than constructing new buildings.
42 Adaptive reuse of the Newport Mansions significantly reduces environmental impact
43 by minimizing land disturbance, construction waste, and carbon emissions
44 associated with new development.

45 **Effective Date:** June 19th of 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 27

1 **Sponsors:** Teddy Pickford and Jay Barrass

2 **An Act To:** Provide Free Civics Classes for Residents of Rhode Island

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** To inform members of our community about the workings of government
5 and politics of our country, to foster an increased sense of citizenship and
6 understanding, and to provide professional and educational incentives for lifelong
7 learning.

8 **Summary of Provisions**

9 **Section 1: Definitions**

10 Civics: the study of rights, duties, and obligations in relation to government
11 structure, participating in democracy, and responsibilities that come with being a
12 member of a state or form of government.

13 Resident: Any individual who resides within the State of Rhode Island for a period
14 of six months or longer.

15 **Section 2: Provisions**

16 a) The Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), through the Community
17 College of Rhode Island (CCRI), shall establish a statewide program offering free,
18 optional civics classes to residents over the age of 18. These classes shall be made
19 available through public high schools, community colleges, libraries, and community
20 centers. Course topics shall include, but not be limited to: the structure of federal,
21 state, and local government, the Constitution and Bill of Rights, voting rights and
22 election processes, the role of citizens in a democracy, current issues, and policy-
23 making processes.

24 b) These topics will be included in a standardized curriculum for the course, which
25 will be created in consultation with civic educators and other related scholars. To
26 ensure political neutrality, the curriculum shall prioritize the use of primary source
27 documents such as the United States Constitution and the Rhode Island
28 Constitution and shall present multiple historical and contemporary perspectives on
29 policy-making without endorsing specific political parties or candidates. Individuals
30 instructing these courses must be licensed educators, or they must be approved by
31 RIDE to teach the course to ensure quality. By overseeing course content and
32 instructors, RIDE can establish consistency and quality among these courses. To
33 assess the effectiveness of the courses, pre-course and post-course knowledge
34 assessments will be completed by those participating in the programs.

35 c) Classes shall be available in-person and online to ensure accessibility for all
36 residents. In addition, classes will be available in multiple languages as demand
37 exists, to further accessibility to residents.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 27

38 d) Those who complete the course will receive a certificate. There will be a tax
39 refund of no more than \$250, and no less than \$100 for completing the program,
40 the total distribution of which shall be capped at \$2,000,000 per fiscal year.

41 e) To provide further reasoning for participation, RIDE shall coordinate with CCRI to
42 offer three (3) transferable elective credits for successful completion of the course.

43 Additionally, completion shall be recognized as a professional development
44 milestone for state-level certifications and public service employment applications.

45 f) RIDE, in coordination with the Secretary of State and the Division of Motor
46 Vehicles (DMV), shall establish a marketing campaign to advertise these courses.

47 This shall include notices in voter registration mailings, digital advertisements on
48 state websites, and physical signage at all DMV and public library locations.

49 **Justification:** Civic understanding and participation are essential to maintaining a
50 healthy democracy. However, studies have shown that civic knowledge among
51 Americans has steadily declined, with many citizens unable to name basic
52 government functions or constitutional principles. Providing free civics classes will
53 strengthen Rhode Islanders' understanding of their government, empower
54 individuals to engage in informed decision-making, and promote community
55 involvement. By offering financial incentives, academic credit, and career
56 recognition, the state encourages a wider range of residents to invest in their
57 education. By making this education accessible and strictly non-partisan, the state
58 fosters a stronger, more informed, and more active citizenry.

59 **Fiscal Implications:** Initial implementation will require an appropriation of
60 \$500,000 for curriculum development and digital platform hosting. Ongoing costs
61 include the tax refund program (capped at \$2,000,000 annually) and marketing
62 expenses. Funding will be sought through a combination of state appropriations,
63 existing education funds, and federal civic education grants.

64 **Effective Date:** Beginning of the 2027 Fiscal Year.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 28

1 **Sponsors:** Daniel Monsour, Teddy Pickford, and Latham Van Hull

2 **An Act To:** Plan and Construct a Light Rail System for the City of Providence and
3 Its Surrounding Communities

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** This bill will mandate the planning, construction, and upkeep of a light
6 rail system within and surrounding the city of Providence, in order to establish a
7 more efficient and productive method of transportation for civilians.

8 **Summary of Provisions**

9 Section 1: Definitions

10 A light rail system shall be defined as a mode of transportation that utilizes tracks,
11 medium-capacity, low-floor vehicles that draw power from overhead catenaries
12 City of Providence shall refer to the official boundaries for the City of Providence, as
13 defined by the state government.

14 Surrounding Communities shall refer to municipalities directly bordering the City of
15 Providence as well as the Cities of Central Falls and Warwick, as defined by the
16 borders previously stated. These municipalities are Central Falls, Cranston, East
17 Providence, Johnston, North Providence, Pawtucket, and Warwick

18 Section 2: Provisions

19 Setting aside \$500 million dollars from the state budget per year for eight years for
20 the construction of 40 miles of track along new and existing right of ways, until the
21 construction is thoroughly finished or as otherwise determined. If deemed
22 necessary, the state government may increase or lower the annual cost, as high as
23 \$700 million or as low as \$400 million.

24 The creation of a Special Transportation Committee entrusted with the planning and
25 design of the system. The Committee will be authorized to oversee most aspects of
26 the project, including construction and refurbishment of tracks and stations, route
27 planning and execution, hiring and managing employees, among other aspects. The
28 Committee will be subject to state law and will be incentivized to work quickly.

29 The Committee will contain fifteen members, consisting of Rhode Island
30 Department of Transportation officials, State Senators and Representatives, and
31 other important figures. The Committee will vote for and appoint a President.

32 The Rhode Island General Assembly will vote to confirm the routes put in place by
33 the Committee.

34 This project will utilize a design-build project delivery system that will involve
35 contracting in-house workers to operate as a single entity and optimize
36 construction.

37 The municipalities of Cranston, East Providence, Johnston, and Warwick will be
38 covered less than the other municipalities, with the system only covering areas



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 28

39 closest to Providence and with higher road congestion, as well as Warwick's T.F.
40 Green Airport.

41 The state government and Special Transportation Committee will consult with
42 governments of the respective municipalities.

43 **Justification:** The city of Providence and its surrounding communities are growing
44 increasingly inefficient for transportation, and the current transportation system can
45 no longer sufficiently accommodate the tens of thousands of daily commuters.
46 Roads in the Providence area are of poor quality, and have become increasingly
47 subject to traffic jams, negatively affecting people commuting by both car and bus.
48 A light rail system provides a fixed alternative that improves mobility, reliability,
49 and accessibility across the region. Major cities such as Providence, Cranston, and
50 Warwick will all be connected, allowing for regional integration and much easier
51 travel. The long-term benefits of the light rail system include reduced congestion,
52 increased transportation efficiency, and increased access to employment,
53 education, and healthcare. Investing in a light rail system also aligns with the State
54 of Rhode Island's commitment to fostering sustainable development and economic
55 growth in the long-term. The creation of a Special Transportation Committee
56 ensures accountability, oversight, and adaptability throughout the process. While
57 short-term consequences may be felt, a light rail system would provide a long-term
58 proactive investment, replacing the reliance on insufficient and unsustainable.

59 **Fiscal Implications:** The total cost of the light rail system will be approximately
60 \$4 billion. While the cost associated with the project seems like a major expense, it
61 is a necessary commitment and will pay off in the future. The \$500 million annual
62 expense represents a major commitment to the cause, though it may result in a
63 diversion of some public resources. Funds for the project will rely primarily on
64 increased income taxes, primarily for higher tax brackets. Residents earning over
65 \$200,000 per year will see their tax bracket temporarily increase from 6% to 7.5%,
66 and other tax brackets will see their rates increase by a smaller margin. The lowest
67 tax bracket will remain at 3.75%. Additionally, it will be expected that citizens and
68 businesses donate to the project. There is also a risk of cost overruns or delays,
69 which are common in large-scale infrastructure projects. Even with the design-build
70 delivery system, total expenditures could unexpectedly rise beyond initial
71 estimates. These costs must be weighed against the long-term economic benefits
72 that would result from a light rail system. Improved transit will reduce commuting
73 times, therefore increasing worker productivity and making jobs more accessible.
74 Additionally, construction will generate thousands of jobs. Over time, the economic



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 28

75 activity associated with the light rail system will help offset initial costs and provide
76 a positive addition for the State and the Providence area.

77 **Environmental Implications:** During construction, there will be temporary
78 environmental disruption, including increased air and noise pollution and overall
79 emissions. Additionally, local ecosystems may be disrupted. The Special
80 Transportation Committee will aim to minimize these consequences. In the long
81 term, however, a light rail system offers significant environmental benefits. The
82 system will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, air pollution, and reliance on fossil
83 fuels through a shift away from personal vehicles. Limiting environmental risks is
84 especially important in an urban area.

85 **Effective Date:** The light rail project will officially begin on July 1, 2026. On that
86 day, the Special Transportation Committee will meet for the first time, and set in
87 course an overview for the project, including projected dates.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 29

1 **Sponsors:** Ariana Bobiak and Sophie Sullivan

2 **An Act To:** Refine the Asterisk

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** The purpose of this bill is to ensure that candidates who receive an
5 asterisk on a voting ballot are selected through qualified and (mostly) unbiased
6 individuals within each committee.

7 **Summary of Provisions**

8 Section 1: Definitions

9 Asterisk: a symbol placed next to a name, result, or title to indicate that it is
10 qualified, conditional, or requires special context. An asterisk * will appear next to
11 the name of the endorsed candidate on the ballot.

12 District Committee: a formally organized group responsible for managing, planning,
13 or overseeing operations, policies, or activities within a specific geographic area or
14 administrative division.

15 Endorsement: Endorsing is the process whereby party officials designate a person
16 to be the candidate representing their party in a primary, and if no primary, in the
17 general election. If you are the endorsed candidate for a public office, such as
18 senator in the General Assembly or town council, you will be issued nomination
19 papers, and you must submit the required number of valid signatures in order to
20 qualify to be on the ballot.

21 Section 2: Provisions

22 This bill establishes a minimum of five members for each district committee. Under
23 current law, committees may consist of as few as three members, which allows for
24 situations in which a committee is made up largely of a candidate's relatives,
25 spouses, or close associates. By requiring a minimum of five members, this bill
26 promotes broader discussion and a more representative endorsement process.
27 Additionally, this bill prohibits immediate family members, including spouses, from
28 serving on endorsement committees to prevent conflicts of interest. The bill also
29 prohibits any candidate seeking an endorsement from serving as a voting member
30 of the committee issuing that endorsement, ensuring that candidates cannot
31 directly influence their own endorsement. With the current structure, it is common
32 for committee members not to reflect the political affiliation of the party they
33 represent, leading to endorsement outcomes that favor individual or incumbent
34 interests over the collective views of party voters. To address this issue, this bill
35 requires committee members to be registered members of the party they serve and
36 to have voted in at least two of the last three primary elections conducted by that
37 party. These reforms increase transparency, accountability, and confidence in the
38 endorsement process.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 29

39 **Justification:** Within state elections, candidates can receive an endorsement from
40 their district's committee. This is symbolized through an asterisk placed next to the
41 endorsed candidate's name on the voting ballot. In theory, each city, town, city
42 council ward, and legislative district in Rhode Island has a corresponding
43 Democratic and Republican committee whose main purpose is to issue
44 endorsements in specific elections. Although the sentiment behind an asterisk is
45 ultimately positive, there is a need to refine the qualifications of such committees.
46 Endorsed candidates should be endorsed for the right reasons, not just based on
47 connections. An asterisk should be placed next to the name of someone who will
48 serve their district well, and is deserving of special recognition from people besides
49 their family or friends.

50 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A

51 **Effective Date:** January 1st, 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 30

1 **Sponsors:** Grayson Lacroix

2 **An Act To:** Align Insurance Coverage Definitions with WPATH (World Professional
3 Association for Transgender Health) Standards of Care

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** To have insurance companies cover all gender affirming care and align
6 their definitions of coverage under the Standards of Care of WPATH.

7 **Summary of Provisions**

8 Section 1: Definitions

9 Medically Necessary refers to those essential for diagnosing, preventing, or treating
10 an illness, injury, or disease that meet accepted medical standards and are not
11 provided primarily for convenience.

12 WPATH refers to World Professional Association for Transgender Health

13 Gender Affirming Care refers to a holistic and supportive approach to healthcare
14 that affirms and respects an individual's gender identity.

15 SOC-8 refers to WPATHS Standards of Care version 8, which clarifies how medically
16 necessary applies to gender diverse individuals in a medical setting.

17 Gender Diverse Individuals refers to someone whos gender identity does not
18 conform with their sex assigned at birth.

19 Gender Dysphoria refers to a severe distress or discomfort when ones personal
20 internal identity does not match with their assigned sex at birth.

21 Section 2: Provisions

22 The main focus of care in this bill will pertain to gender affirming care for
23 transgender and gender diverse individuals. Under WPATH and the SOC-8,
24 "medically necessary" pertains to a service required to treat gender dysphoria that
25 aligns with SOC-8. Under most insurance companies, gender affirming care that
26 isn't surgery is seen as cosmetic and not covered, such as hormone replacement
27 therapy (HRT) and puberty blockers. This bill would make it so insurance companies
28 and medical professionals cannot deny care or coverage to gender affirming care
29 based on outdated terms. This bill would reshape all insurance companies to list all
30 gender affirming care as medically necessary and not as cosmetic. Insurance
31 companies shall list all gender affirming care for adolescents (13-18) and adults
32 (18+) as medically necessary, If insurance companies were to deny coverage or a
33 medical professionals denies care of gender affirming care, a fine would be placed
34 on the company or medical professional.

35 **Justification:** The purpose of this act is to prevent insurance companies and
36 medical professionals from denying coverage and care and justifying it by outdated
37 terms and policy. Gender affirming care eases psychological stress and is widely
38 considered life saving. When gender affirming care and other stigmatized care is



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 30

39 labeled as cosmetic, it increases the stigma around people who need this care and
40 the care itself, and also makes it seem "less important". By implementing this bill, it
41 would allow for people to access the care they need without restrictions and
42 rebuttal.

43 **Fiscal Implications:** A fine of no less than five-hundred (500) and no more than
44 two-thousand (2,000) on the insurance company/medical professional.

45 **Effective Date:** January 1st, 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 31

1 **Sponsors:** Lilly Chatterley and Natalie Johnston

2 **An Act To:** Require Mental Evaluation Before Purchase of Firearms

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** The purpose is to require a mental evaluation on a person attempting to
5 purchase a firearm before the purchase.

6 **Summary of Provisions**

7 Section 1: Definitions

8 Mental Evaluation shall refer to a test by a licensed mental health professional
9 meant to determine psychological conditions or mental illnesses.

10 Possession shall refer to ownership of an item.

11 Licensed Mental Health Professional shall refer to persons who have met all
12 requirements under Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH), Rhode Island
13 Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities & Hospitals
14 (BHDDH), and/or Rhode Island Board of Mental Health Counselors and Marriage &
15 Family Therapists (RIBOMHCMFT); as well as received the highest level of
16 certifications provided by RIDOH, BHDDH, and/or RIBOMHCMFT.

17 Members Of Law Enforcement shall refer to any persons who is of a profession
18 listed under R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-47-9.1, and/or R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-47-9.
19 (Members of the navy, state troopers police officers, firefighters, sheriffs, airport
20 police, state marshals; deputy state fire marshals assigned to the bomb squad,
21 those assigned to the investigation unit; fire department arson investigators
22 (provided that the investigator is a graduate of a police-training academy),
23 correctional officers, chief inspector and inspectors within the office of inspections,
24 within the department of corrections; members of the city or town police force...
25 ect.)

26 Waiting Period shall refer to the standard 7-day waiting period that applies to all
27 firearm purchases in Rhode Island, stated under R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-47-35. The
28 waiting period begins when the purchase application is submitted, not when the
29 firearm is delivered. The only exceptions to this waiting period are stated under
30 section G and section H of R.I. Gen. Laws § 11-47-35, as well as R.I. Gen. Laws §
31 11-47-35.1. (Laws outlining the baseline requirements to purchase a firearm and
32 those who are excused from the requirements).

33 Section 2: Provisions

34 In order to purchase or continue to have possession of a firearm, a mental
35 evaluation by a licensed mental health professional is required. Members of law
36 enforcement shall not be included in this act, but only when the firearm is for
37 professional purposes, and the firearm(s) shall be used solely for such purposes.
38 Businesses are prohibited from selling firearms to persons who either have not



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 31

39 passed the mental evaluation or cannot provide proof of passing the evaluation at
40 the time of purchase. This act will not affect the waiting period for any/all firearm
41 purchases.

42 **Justification:** Implementing a required mental evaluation to own a firearm will
43 decrease the amount of danger firearms possess and allow more people to receive
44 help for mental struggles. Suicide is the leading type of death in deaths by firearms
45 with 76% in the state of Rhode Island and the national average is 62% of deaths by
46 firearm were suicides. In addition, over half of the people with serious mental
47 illness do not receive help nationally. With proper mental evaluations, suicides by
48 firearm and the number of mentally ill people without help will decrease because
49 resources are shown to be available. No other states currently have this type of
50 law in effect, however federal law prohibits the selling of firearms to people known
51 to have some form of mental illness.

52 **Fiscal Implications:** 1. Businesses that sell firearms to persons who do not pass
53 the mental evaluation will be fined \$200 for the first offense, increasing by \$100 for
54 each offense.

55 2. Fines can not exceed \$500.

56 3. Business owners who experience over 4 offenses will face prison for no less than
57 1 month and no more than 1 year in prison.

58 4. Fines will go to the Rhode Island Department of Health

59 5. Persons with firearms that do not have proper mental evaluations will have all
60 firearms within their possession removed.

61 **Effective Date:** This act will take effect on January 1st, 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 32

1 **Sponsors:** Dante Martinez

2 **An Act To:** The Immigrant Worker Protection Act aims to ensure that all immigrant
3 workers in Rhode Island, regardless of their immigration status, receive the same
4 labor protections as other workers. It prohibits employers from exploiting
5 immigrant workers through unfair treatment, threats, or retaliation for reporting
6 labor law violations. The Act establishes clear guidelines for employer conduct and
7 empowers the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training to investigate
8 complaints, ensuring fair treatment and safe working conditions for all workers in
9 the state.

10 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

11 **Purpose:** Because they are hesitant to voice their opinions, immigrant workers
12 frequently endure unfair treatment. Some businesses violate labor regulations in
13 order to capitalize on this fear. In order to safeguard workers, promote ethical
14 companies, and ensure that labor regulations are adhered to, this bill is required.
15 Every employee in Rhode Island has a right to safe and equitable working
16 conditions. The states of Illinois, California, New York, and Washington are currently
17 enforcing this law. Each has legislation that reflects this idea. Adopting this bill is
18 not only required by law, but it is also morally right, protecting each worker's
19 dignity and fortifying the bonds that bind our community together.

20 **Summary of Provisions**

21 Section 1: Definitions

22 Immigrant worker means any person working in Rhode Island, no matter their
23 immigration status.

24 Employer means any person or business that hires workers in Rhode Island.

25 Exploitation means unfair treatment at work, including not paying proper wages,
26 creating unsafe working conditions, making threats, or using immigration status to
27 scare workers.

28 Retaliation means punishing a worker for reporting a labor law violation, such as
29 firing them, their cutting hours, or making threats against them.

30 Section 2: Provisions

31 a) Employers may not threaten to report a worker's immigration status in order to
32 scare, control, or punish that worker.

33 b) Immigrant workers shall receive the same labor protections as all other workers
34 in Rhode Island, including minimum wage and safe working conditions.

35 c) An employer may not use a worker's immigration status as a reason to pay less
36 or deny legal benefits.

37 d) The Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training may investigate labor
38 complaints from workers regardless of immigration status.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 32

39 **Justification:** Immigrant workers often face unfair treatment because they are
40 afraid to speak up. Some employers take advantage of this fear and break labor
41 laws. This bill is necessary to protect workers, support fair businesses, and make
42 sure labor laws are followed. Everyone who works in Rhode Island deserves to be
43 treated fairly and safely. This bill is currently enforced in the states of California,
44 New York, Washington and Illinois. All have laws that mirror this proposal. Enacting
45 this Bill is not just a legal necessity, but a moral obligation that upholds the dignity
46 of every worker and strengthens the foundation of our community.

47 **Fiscal Implications:** Enforcement Costs: The Rhode Island Department of Labor
48 and Training may incur additional expenses related to the enforcement of the Act,
49 including staffing, training, and outreach efforts to educate workers about their
50 rights.

51 Fines and Penalties: Employers who violate the provisions of this Act may face fines
52 of up to \$10,000 per violation, which could generate revenue for the state.
53 However, this may also lead to increased legal costs if employers contest these
54 fines.

55 Impact on Employers: Compliance with the new regulations may result in increased
56 operational costs for employers, particularly small businesses, as they ensure safe
57 working conditions and fair wages.

58 Economic Impact on Workers: By providing protections and fair wages for
59 immigrant workers, the Act could increase disposable income, leading to greater
60 consumer spending and stimulating local economies.

61 Long-term Benefits: Protecting workers' rights may contribute to a more stable
62 workforce, reduced turnover, and improved productivity, which can positively
63 impact the state's economy over time.

64 **Effective Date:** This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2027.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 33

1 **Sponsors:** Amara Neves and Maya Leonard

2 **An Act To:** Change school start times of Rhode Island public school districts by
3 switching the start times of elementary school with high school.

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** To allow students to follow their circadian rhythms while getting more
6 sleep to prevent any car accidents from tired students and increase academic
7 performance and participation.

8 **Summary of Provisions**

9 Section 1: Definitions

10 A school start time shall refer to the exact time in which all students are expected
11 to be in class and the time class officially begins (this does not include
12 extracurricular activities before or after the main school day).

13 Non complaint schools refer to schools that refuse to follow the bill. Circadian
14 rhythm refers to a biological clock that balances sleep waking based upon one's
15 needs.

16 Drowsiness means a lack of sleep, causing someone to become tired throughout the
17 time they are awake.

18 Section 2: Provisions

19 Rhode Island public school districts will be required to ensure high school days start
20 when elementary school days usually start by switching the start times of their
21 elementary and high schools.

22 **Justification:** Adolescents have a different circadian rhythm compared to
23 elementary school children. Their natural clocks want them to stay up later and
24 sleep in later, changing the school start time of high school with elementary school
25 will allow for students to match their biological clocks. This will allow then for
26 students to drive more safely to school as well as get more hours of sleep and
27 perform better academically.

28 **Fiscal Implications:** There should be no change in costs as the elementary buses
29 and high school buses will switch students, meaning there will be no need for more
30 funding to have more buses.

31 **Environmental Implications:** This bill would not effect the environment more
32 than the environment is already affected by the buses.

33 **Effective Date:** The start of the school year of 2027-2028.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 34

1 **Sponsors:** Zayn Adam

2 **An Act To:** Build Community Opportunities and Economic Equality

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** This bill will address economic inequality and the fall in quality of social
5 services by utilizing six, new measures. These include a high-net-worth surcharge,
6 estate tax reforms, a separate capital gains tax, worker owned firms incentives, an
7 outlined allocation for newly raised funds, and residential integrity measures. While
8 some sections of this bill touch on and reform existing tax codes for the State of
9 Rhode Island, others establish wholly new taxes for individuals at the top 10% in
10 wealth in the state. While this bill will not raise taxes for the majority of low-income
11 or middle class households, these groups will benefit from the allocation of funds
12 (see Community and Individual Opportunity Dividend).

13 **Summary of Provisions**

14 Section 1: Definitions

15 High Net Worth Individuals - Individuals whose total value of assets is over
16 \$1,500,000 minus liabilities

17 Resident Individuals - Residents whose domicile state is Rhode Island

18 Out-of-State Individuals - Individuals whose domicile is not in Rhode Island but
19 whose assets or income is generated or held (wholly or partially) within the state

20 Domicile State - the state from which a person holds a drivers license, votes in, is
21 held in a correctional facility in, or has declared their main domicile to be in

22 Net Worth - The total value of all assets minus liabilities

23 Retirement Accounts - Financial Assets which are legally restricted for use in
24 retirement to replace a normal employment income

25 Small Business Operating Assets - tangible or intangible assets that are actively
26 used in the common operation of qualifying small business that are not held
27 primarily for the purpose of resale

28 Personal Property of Reasonable Value - Property held for ordinary, personal or
29 familial use and not for the purpose of resale, speculation, or luxury display

30 Worker Ownership - over 70% of a firm is owned by 90% or more of its employees

31 Excess Funds - Newly available funds from the funds generated by An Act To Build
32 Community Opportunities and Economic Equality

33 Section 2: Provisions High Net Worth Contribution Surcharge

34 1. High Net Worth Resident Individuals will receive a wealth tax of 1% annually on
35 all assets held within the state. For non-location based assets, or assets outside of
36 the state a 1.5% tax will be levied annually. High Net Worth Out-of-State
37 Individuals will be taxed 2% on all assets located within the state of Rhode Island;



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 34

38 2. This amount will increase to 1.5% and 2% respectively for a Resident Individual
39 worth over \$25,000,000 and increase again to 3% and 3.5% respectively for a
40 Resident Individuals worth over \$100,000,000;

41 3. This amount will increase to 3% for an Out-of-State Individual worth over
42 \$25,000,000 and increase again to 3.7% for an Out-of-State Individual worth over
43 \$100,000,000;

44 4. Assets of all High Net Worth Individuals excluded from taxation, but contribute to
45 net worth calculations are: Primary Residences (up to a property value of
46 \$1,500,000 with whatever exceeding amounts contributing to the total valuation of
47 all assets); Social Security Benefits; Small Business Operating Assets; Agricultural
48 Assets; Personal Property of Reasonable Value; Life Insurance Policy Value (up to
49 \$2,000,000 with whatever exceeding amounts contributing to the total valuation of
50 all assets); Trust Assets Held for Dependents or Disabled Individuals; Retirement
51 Accounts

52 5. All High Net Worth Individuals with Assets in Rhode Island will be required to
53 report the total valuation of their assets to the State;

54 6. All the above numerical figures excluding tax rates may be changed every 3
55 years to reflect inflation if necessary.

56 Fair Estate Practices

57 1. Estate Tax Exemptions shall be raised from \$1,802,431 to \$2,000,000;

58 2. Estate Values over this amount will receive a tax of 8%, followed by a tax of
59 8.5% for taxable estate values of over \$250,000 and continuing on in increments of
60 0.5% for every subsequent \$250,000;

61 3. Beneficiaries may not receive their inheritance until this Estate Tax has been paid
62 in full;

63 4. All the above numerical figures excluding tax rates may be changed every 3
64 years to reflect inflation if necessary.

65 Capital Gains Tax and Long Term Investment Incentive

66 1. Realized Capital Gains will receive an exemption from taxation up to \$2,000 and
67 will not be taxed as income though it will continue to be calculated in finding an
68 income tax rate;

69 2. Realized Capital Gains will be taxed at a rate of 4.25% up to \$80,000 over the
70 exemption. This rate will continue to increase by 1.25% for every subsequent
71 \$35,000 realized in capital gains over \$83,000;

72 3. Realized Capital Gains shall be included if they result from the appreciation of an
73 asset held primarily for investment, speculation, or wealth accumulation;



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 34

74 4. Realized Capital Gains shall be excluded if they arise from assets held primarily
75 for personal use, retirement security, or essential livelihood;

76 5. Assets held for over 5 years will receive a 15% tax rate reduction, and Assets
77 held over 10 years will receive a 35% tax rate reduction when realized;

78 6. If capital is lost on an investment when realized, this lost capital will carry over
79 to the exemption which may not exceed \$10,000;

80 7. All the above numerical figures excluding tax rates may be changed every 3
81 years to reflect inflation if necessary.

82 Worker Cooperative Incentives

83 1. Firms with worker ownership will receive reasonable state purchasing preference;

84 2. Firms with worker ownership will receive 5% tax credit on qualifying payroll.

85 Community and Individual Opportunity Dividend

86 1. Until 7 years after the passage of An Act To Build Community Opportunities and
87 Economic Equality, excess funds will be allocated percentage-wise to: Rent
88 Stabilization (35%); Dispersed Affordable Housing Construction (25%); Tuition-free
89 community college and trade programs (15%); Paying off state debt (15%); Small
90 Business Grants (10%);

91 2. The allocation above mentioned will be carried out by a new public trust;

92 3. After 7 years the excess fund allocation established in An Act To Build Community
93 Opportunities and Economic Equality will be subject to a legislative review where it
94 will be decided whether the legislature will continue to manage the allocation of
95 excess funds or if the trust will take over allocation as well as administration;

96 4. After 3 years a formal audit must be carried out into the established trust;

97 5. After the completion of the audit, the legislature will have the chance to vote on
98 continuing the use of the trust or establishing a new trust, should mismanagement
99 be found, to carry out the duties outlined in An Act To Build Community

100 Opportunities and Economic Equality.

101 Residential Integrity Measures

102 1. After the passing of An Act To Build Community Opportunities and Economic
103 Equality, High Net Worth Resident Individuals will be forced to pay a 7% tax on
104 unrealized and realized capital gains and other assets only if they relocate their
105 domicile state from Rhode Island to another state within the first 15 months of the
106 wealth tax established by the High Net Worth Contribution Surcharge.

107 2. If assets are moved from Rhode Island to another state within the first 2 months
108 of the passing of An Act To Build Community Opportunities and Economic Equality,
109 those assets will receive a one-time 3% tax at the point they are realized.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 34

110 **Justification:** Rhode Island consistently ranks in the top 15 most economically
111 unequal states in the US and while some states try to address these issues, our
112 state has failed to do so. The top 5% of earners command greater capital than the
113 bottom 50% and earn over 28 times more in income than the bottom 20% in our
114 state. While some may point to this as inevitable, I refuse to do so just as others
115 should. The answer to this broken system which seems only to ever benefit the
116 already wealthy is government intervention and redistribution of wealth. The
117 purpose of government is to serve all the people, not just the capitalist class, and
118 the government has certain abilities allotted to it. I say it is time to use those
119 abilities to ensure the working class of this state isn't pushed out of their own
120 homes because they can't afford to live next to that big, new mansion.

121 I say it is time to use those abilities to show the working class of this state that
122 their representatives will fight for them. Clear as these ambitions may be it is a
123 long road to travel to make it so our system serves the producers instead of the
124 exploiters, but it is a road that must be taken. While this bill may not bring all the
125 change we, advocates of working class Rhode Islanders, hope for, it's a start.

126 **Fiscal Implications:** While reports on all privately held assets within the state are
127 not yet fully available to us, this bill will generate at the very least over
128 \$340,000,000 if applied solely to the richest man in the state. If applied to all high-
129 net-worth individuals as outlined in the bill, I expect to see over \$1,000,000,000
130 generated annually from this bill alone. These funds will be allocated to a variety of
131 plans and purposes within the state. As it is possible some high-net-worth
132 individuals attempt to move themselves or their assets out of the state, our
133 residential integrity measures incentivize continued investment within the state of
134 Rhode Island while not restricting the free movement of individuals. Finally, our
135 new system of taxing realized capital gains protects the casual share-holder from
136 taxation while also rewarding leaving money in investments over longer periods of
137 time to further boost both the state and national economy.

138 **Effective Date:** July 1st, 2028



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 35

1 **Sponsors:** Eben Bamberry and Matt Zielinski

2 **An Act To:** Minimize Ecological Impacts on Natural Habitats in the Expansion of
3 Renewable Energy

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** This bill will set limits to the footprint renewable energy projects are able
6 to intrude upon undeveloped, natural lands and waters. It will also give incentives
7 to more ecological practices in implementing renewable energy. Energy companies
8 will be required to follow these laws and regulations regarding ecosystems, land
9 use, and efficiency.

10 **Summary of Provisions**

11 Section 1: Definitions

12 Ecosystems (n) - A biological community of interacting organisms and their physical
13 environment.

14 Wind Turbine (n)- A turbine having a large vaned wheel rotated by the wind to
15 generate electricity.

16 Renewable Energy(n)- Energy from a source that is not depleted when used such as
17 wind or solar power.

18 Decarbonization - reducing or removing carbon dioxide emissions from human
19 activities, mainly by switching from fossil fuels to renewable or low-carbon energy
20 sources

21 Natural lands - an area of relatively undeveloped land which has substantially
22 retained its characteristics as provided by nature or has been substantially restored,
23 or which can be feasibly restored to a near-natural condition and which derives
24 outstanding value from its wildlife, scenic, open space, parkland or recreational
25 characteristics, or any combination thereof.

26 Agrovoltaics - the use of land for both agriculture and solar photovoltaic energy
27 generation

28 Conservation - preservation, protection, or restoration of the natural environment
29 and of wildlife

30 Renewable energy project - a project generating electrical energy from all
31 renewable energy sources including, but not limited to Solar Power Project or Wind
32 Power Project or Small Hydro Power project or a combination thereof, with or
33 without Energy Storage System

34 Section 2: Provisions

35 Minimize the area of natural habitats (land and sea), that gets cleared for use in
36 renewable energy projects



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 35

37 - For commercial renewable energy projects which require the clearing of natural
38 lands exceeding 30 acres in size, 50% of the total area of natural lands must be
39 preserved for conservation

40 - Provide tax credits or exemptions to businesses that install solar panels on pre-
41 existing and new construction buildings and parking lots

42 - Provide tax credits or exemptions for renewable energy projects to be installed
43 in lands that have been tainted and cannot be utilized in alternative ways, such as
44 capped landfills

45 - Maximize efficiency in renewable energy ventures

46 - Provide tax credits for effective use of land under and around renewable energy
47 projects, such as agrovoltaics or livestock

48 - Encourage wind energy over solar wherever conditions are suitable

49 - Converts more energy into usable energy than solar

50 - Can operate day and night

51 - Already has a relatively small physical footprint

52 - Creates a lot of jobs, can be and is a big industry, being the "Ocean State"

53 **Justification:** Matthew and I have lived in West Greenwich practically our entire
54 lives. Being arguably the most forested town in Rhode Island, that's a big part of
55 the appeal to living here. Naturally, we appreciate the lands around us, both having
56 been Boy Scouts, hikers, and Matthew enjoys hunting as well. However in recent
57 years, the ecosystems around us have been shrinking. This is for a few reasons, but
58 the most apparent has been due to ground-mounted solar arrays. Hundreds of
59 acres of primarily forested lands have been cleared, for solar panels to be put in.
60 This is not unique to West Greenwich, similar solar farms have been built
61 throughout the state. One such solar farm, Robin Hollow Solar, has actually been
62 built directly across from my house, and I've seen firsthand the impact it has had.
63 I've seen a significant increase in larger wildlife within my neighborhood that
64 typically stay away from residential areas, more deer, foxes, coyotes, and even a
65 black bear. Noise has increased as well, both from the highway that the trees once
66 provided a buffer from, and from trucks and increased traffic both during
67 construction, and operation of the solar farm. To be clear, it's not solar itself that
68 we are against, in fact we're both advocates of renewable energy. We're members
69 of the Offshore Wind Energy CTE at our school, and have researched extensively
70 wind turbines and other forms of renewable energy over the past four years. What
71 we would like is to optimize the implementation of renewable energy, while
72 reducing the ecological impact of such ventures.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 2 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 35

73 **Fiscal Implications:** Providing additional tax credits for those who comply with the
74 recommendations covered in this bill may raise taxes in surrounding areas
75 - The cost of energy from renewable sources is cheaper than fossil fuels, so the
76 expansion of renewable energy may result in lower prices to consumers.

77 **Environmental Implications:** The existing environments and ecosystems of our
78 state will be better protected

79 - In the transition to renewable energy, significantly less emissions will be
80 produced, and long-term the benefits will be great

81 **Effective Date:** This legislation should go into effect January 1st, 2027.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 36

1 **Sponsors:** Brody Ruggieri and Priya Cordeiro

2 **An Act To:** Empower Small Business

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** The purpose of this bill is to reduce the excessive regulation on small
5 businesses in the State of Rhode Island in order to advance job creation, the
6 development of business, and economic growth.

7 **Summary of Provisions**

8 **Section 1: Definitions**

9 Small Businesses - Any enterprise that is independently owned and has fewer than
10 500 employees OR produces less than \$15,000,000 in annual revenue. This
11 definition excludes businesses dominant in their fields(dominant businesses).

12 Dominant Businesses - Any business that controls more than 40% of its relevant
13 markets or has the market power to manipulate prices and hinder competition in its
14 relevant markets.

15 Relevant Markets - The market in which products and/or services are regarded
16 within the same category.

17 Workers' Compensation Insurance - Insurance paid entirely by employers that
18 provides medical care, rehabilitation, and wage replacement to the employees who
19 require this treatment if injured as a result of their job.

20 State Corporate Income Tax - A state tax on the profits of a business.

21 **Section 2: Provisions**

22 1. Small Businesses are not required to carry workers' compensation insurance and
23 it is entirely up to the employer whether or not they do pay for this insurance.
24 Employers who do not carry this insurance must be aware that employees injured
25 as a result of the work environment are able to file lawsuits against the business.
26 Furthermore, employers who do not carry workers' compensation insurance must
27 advise employees ahead of time.

28 2. Eradicate the state corporate income tax on enterprises that fit in the category of
29 small businesses. All other businesses that do not fit in this category will continue
30 to be required to pay the corporate income tax.

31 3. Amend the Rhode Island Biodiesel Heating Oil Act of 2013 to reduce the required
32 heating oil mandate from 50% biodiesel to 30% biodiesel by 2030.

33 **Justification:** This bill is to encourage a Rhode Island economy of
34 entrepreneurship and growth. Rhode Island is consistently ranked towards the
35 bottom of states to start a business in. As the smallest state in the union, Rhode
36 Island has the opportunity to excel in small business efforts and heighten
37 competitiveness. As federal regulations get stricter, income inequality and prices
38 have risen, jobs have been lost, and the motivation of the people in Rhode Island to



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 36

39 establish their own businesses has diminished. While the state doesn't have the
40 power to override federal regulations, Rhode Island does have the power to
41 implement looser laws on Small Businesses to keep money in the hands of the
42 foundation of the state.

43 **Fiscal Implications:** 1. Small business employers will not be required to pay for
44 the workers' compensation insurance which can bring the employer \$360-\$960
45 more annually.

46 2. The eradication of the state corporate income tax on small businesses will
47 guarantee at least \$400 back into the pockets of the small business.

48 3. Amending the Rhode Island Biodiesel Heating Oil Act of 2013 will slow down the
49 implication of biodiesel heating oil due to cost issues for the 47% of Rhode Island
50 small businesses that rely on heating oil. Each gallon of biodiesel heating oil can
51 cost a small business an increase of \$0.70 per gallon compared to their fossil fuel
52 counterparts.

53 **Environmental Implications:** The only environmental impacts come from the
54 energy concerns. This bill does not fully dismiss moving towards a cleaner society,
55 it just slows down the process to protect small businesses that serve the
56 community.

57 **Effective Date:** The bill, if passed, is to go into effect by January 1, 2029.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 37

1 **Sponsors:** Aubrie Gay

2 **An Act To:** Have the state begin to put more funding towards organizations that
3 help the homeless and housing organizations in the State of Rhode Island.

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** Funding cuts have closed shelters all over Rhode Island, resulting in
6 many having to survive in our harsh winter conditions this past season. To ensure
7 more housing positions for the homeless, this bill requires an increase of funding
8 towards organizations that help the homeless by the year 2034.

9 **Summary of Provisions**

10 Section 1: Definitions

11 Department of Housing: a Cabinet-level executive agency responsible for national
12 policy and programs that address America's housing needs, improve communities,
13 and enforce fair housing laws

14 Section 2: Provisions 1. Major and minor homeless organizations shall receive
15 proper funding and help funding organizations by the year 2034

16 2. The Executive Office of Housing shall be designated to help the organizations
17 they work with voice their needs to the state, while The Grants Management Office
18 and the Office of Management and Budget will be designated in funding the
19 organizations

20 **Justification:** Funding in the State of Rhode Island has gone down 44%-61% in
21 the year 2025. Around 631 beds have been forced to shut down all across the
22 state, causing an increase in rapid homelessness and a less likely chance for
23 unhoused people to get permanent housing. The Department of Housing is in need
24 of at least \$17.8 million to allow more housing options to open up. If funding is not
25 picked up in the next few years, the percentage of homeless living outside will
26 triple. This bill will allow more money to be gathered for the Department of
27 Housing.

28 This bill is crucial to maintain funding for the Department of Housing so that they
29 and their workers are able to help those in need. Homelessness has taken over the
30 State of Rhode Island, leading to these people in need to live outside in dangerous
31 conditions, whether it be the harmful weather or where they are located (by
32 highways, in woods that are populated by predatory wildlife, etc.). In order to get
33 these people the resources and shelter they need, our state needs to approve a
34 better system of funding that does not consist of cutting down on costs. An increase
35 in the funding will lead to a percentage of 21% more beds opening.

36 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Housing is in need of at least \$13.5
37 million to close the gap in funding, which will likely lead to taxes going up for



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 37

38 people that earn more than \$1 million (the 'millionaires tax') to raise more for
39 funding annually.

40 **Environmental Implications:** There will be less people living outside, which can
41 potentially lead to less littering and a cleaner state for Rhode Island.

42 **Effective Date:** This bill will go into effect August 31, 2034.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 38

1 **Sponsors:** Alex Dieffenbach and Maksim Pototskii

2 **An Act To:** Require All NCAA Colleges in Rhode Island to Employ a Certified Sports
3 Psychologist for Student-Athletes

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** The purpose of this bill is to ensure that all NCAA member institutions
6 provide adequate mental health support for their student-athletes by requiring
7 access to a certified sports psychologist.

8 **Summary of Provisions**

9 Section 1: Definitions

10 Sports Psychologist: A licensed mental health professional with specialized training
11 in sports and performance psychology.

12 NCAA Member Institution: Any college or university officially affiliated with the
13 National Collegiate Athletic Association.

14 Student Athlete: A person who participates in an organized competitive sport while
15 also pursuing an education at a school.

16 Athlete Mental Health Report: A mandatory annual screening process designed to
17 identify those who may be experiencing psychological distress and benefit from
18 support.

19 Postseason eligibility: The requirements that a team must meet to participate in the
20 playoffs after the regular season ends.

21 Reallocation: The act or process of reassigning something.

22 Section 2: Provisions

23 Step 1: All NCAA institutions must employ at least one certified sports psychologist
24 to serve their student-athletes.

25 Step 2: Institutions with more than 200 athletes must employ one additional sports
26 psychologist for every 200 additional students added to their programs.

27 Step 3: The sports psychologist will provide individual counseling and mental health
28 support, group workshops on specific topics students are struggling with (such as
29 stress management or injury recovery), emergency response services for mental
30 health crises, and will be an advocate for their students.

31 Step 4: All athletic departments will have annual training given by the sports
32 psychologist for all coaches, trainers, and staff.

33 Step 5: Each college/university will submit an annual athlete mental health report
34 to the NCAA.

35 **Justification:** College athletes face immense physical and mental demands.

36 Studies show that over 30% of college athletes experience significant anxiety or
37 depression, but less than 10% seek help due to shame or lack of access. While
38 most athletic departments employ athletic trainers, strength coaches, nutritionists,



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 38

39 or even team physicians, many schools still lack these specialized psychologists.
40 Untreated mental health issues can lead to decreased academic performance,
41 increased dropout rates, higher injury risk, and in severe cases, mental health
42 crises.

43 As of right now, 2 out of our 8 colleges/universities in Rhode Island (that are also
44 apart of the NCAA) have sports psychologists. Both of these institutions are division
45 1 schools and have been known for their athletic programs. Even Brown, one of the
46 two schools, has been called the "happiest ivy" because of the support and
47 resources they give to their student athletes. The NCAA has the resources and
48 moral obligation to prioritize mental health alongside physical training. Ensuring
49 every athlete has access to a sports psychologist promotes fairness, prevents
50 crises, and enhances the overall performance of these athletes.

51 **Fiscal Implications:** Funding will come from a 0.5 percent reallocation of the
52 NCAA annual revenue, federal education and health grants supporting mental
53 wellness initiatives, and colleges/universities are also able to apply for partial
54 funding to share sports psychologists by regions if full time employment is not
55 financially feasible. The NCAA will monitor the compliance and if action is not taken
56 into hiring a sports psychologist then there will be a 50,000 dollar fine per year
57 and/or a temporary suspension from postseason eligibility depending on what the
58 state deems necessary.

59 **Environmental Implications:** Student athletes will be socially impacted since not
60 only will they be physically prepared but now mentally. With the help of these
61 psychologists, athletes can understand that they are human and will not always
62 play "perfect." This will also aid with creating less anxiety for players before their
63 games. Students will also be able to effectively navigate social pressures and
64 understand their own mental health better.

65 **Effective Date:** This bill shall take effect beginning in the 2027-2028 academic
66 year.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 39

1 **Sponsors:** Maria Okechukwu

2 **An Act To:** Ensure that funding is distributed equitably to school districts with the
3 greatest needs, particularly those in low-income communities.

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** The purpose of this bill is to establish clear accountability measures to
6 ensure that funds are used effectively and that projects are completed on time and
7 within budget. Furthermore, promoting community engagement by involving
8 students, parents, teachers, and community members in the planning and decision-
9 making process, to ensure that projects meet local needs and priorities.

10 **Summary of Provisions**

11 **Section 2: Provisions**

12 This bill aims to improve school infrastructure through a combination of funding
13 mechanisms, including state/local bonds, grants to school districts, and tax credits
14 to encourage private investment. The bill targets several types of projects:
15 renovations of existing facilities (roofs, HVAC, plumbing), new school construction
16 to address overcrowding, technology upgrades (internet, interactive whiteboards),
17 safety/security enhancements (surveillance, access control), and energy efficiency
18 improvements (lighting, windows, insulation).

19 The intended benefits of this bill include an improved learning environment,
20 enhanced health and safety by addressing hazards, increased energy efficiency
21 leading to cost savings, economic development through job creation, and
22 community revitalization by improving school appearance and functionality. The bill
23 also considers equity in funding distribution, sustainability in design and materials,
24 community engagement in project planning, and accountability measures to ensure
25 effective use of funds and timely project completion.

26 **Justification:** The "School Infrastructure Improvement" bill is justified by the need
27 to provide modern, safe schools that support effective learning and protect
28 student/staff well-being. Investing in schools boosts local economies by creating
29 jobs and cutting energy costs. The bill also aims to level the playing field by
30 targeting funds to underserved areas, ensuring all students have access to quality
31 facilities and revitalizing communities.

32 **Fiscal Implications:** The "School Infrastructure Improvement" bill requires a large
33 initial investment from federal, state, and local sources for construction and
34 upgrades. It's expected to create jobs, boosting tax revenues and stimulating local
35 economies. Energy-efficient improvements would cut long-term operating costs.
36 Rising property values from better schools could increase local property tax
37 revenues. Improved education is projected to contribute to long-term economic



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 39

38 growth. However, the bill could increase government debt, requiring careful
39 financial planning.

40 **Environmental Implications:** The "School Infrastructure Improvement" bill can
41 promote sustainable building and reduce environmental impact through green
42 materials. It aims to cut carbon footprints via energy-efficient tech like solar panels.
43 Water conservation is encouraged with efficient fixtures. Recycling can minimize
44 construction waste. Better HVAC systems and low-VOC materials improve air
45 quality. Environmentally friendly projects unite communities by creating shared,
46 sustainable spaces and promoting environmental awareness.

47 **Effective Date:** June of 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 40

1 **Sponsors:** Addison Mendoza and Tiffany Blanco

2 **An Act To:** Provide safe parking and living conditions to homeless who are
3 currently living in their cars.

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** This is to help the homeless with basic safety and living features. This
6 would include providing clean water, showers, bathrooms, and other features key to
7 healthy living. We also hope to have a safe place for them to park their cars without
8 fear of high ticket prices and the risk of being towed. We aim to provide better
9 living conditions which can lead to better overall health for these people and the
10 environment

11 **Summary of Provisions**

12 Section 1: Definitions

13 Homeless person(s) as a person who is without a home, or a stable form of
14 permanent housing, residing in a motor vehicle

15 Non-profit as a non-governmental organization, run with the aim to help those who
16 are homeless.

17 Section 2: Provisions

18 This bill establishes a Rhode Island program to fund nonprofit organizations that
19 create and operate safe parking lots for homeless individuals living in their vehicles.
20 Within 180 days of enactment, the Department of Housing must offer grants of up
21 to \$100,000 per year for five years to eligible 501(c)(3) nonprofits, contingent on
22 meeting minimum standards such as providing security, restrooms or hygiene
23 stations, and submitting annual reports detailing demographics served and use of
24 funds.

25 **Justification:** Many homeless who are currently residing in their cars, face the
26 risks of being towed from their parking spot, not having proper places to shower, or
27 use the bathroom, cannot find sufficient places to remove garbage, or face other
28 significant safety issues such as being hit by another car, being robbed, having
29 their car stolen, being assaulted, and weather issues. This will provide a solution to
30 all of these, without further filling existing shelters.

31 **Fiscal Implications:** Safe parking programs for people experiencing homelessness
32 allow individuals living in vehicles to stay overnight in designated lots with access to
33 services. When bathrooms and showers are included, the fiscal impact is moderate
34 but still generally lower than many other homelessness interventions. Annual
35 Operating Costs for the safe parking can cost around 4-8,000\$ to the state each
36 year, and for more costly programs such as ones with showers, bathrooms and
37 supervision, would cost around 50,000. These costs will include 24/7 security and
38 staff, case management, maintenance of bathrooms and showers, and water and



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 40

39 sewerage services. Startup costs would include for program and land startup, and
40 utility hookups.

41 **Environmental Implications:** The environmental implications of this bill include
42 that it will help reduce the amount of improper fecal waste disposal, and the
43 amount of litter in our cities. This also will help reduce the homeless on our streets,
44 and help with more basic hygiene principles which will aid our healthcare system.

45 **Effective Date:** January 1st 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 41

1 **Sponsors:** Jake Daigle

2 **An Act To:** Healthcare Price Transparency and Itemized Billing Act

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** The purpose of this Act is to ensure patient rights to transparent billing,
5 facilitate the discovery of billing errors, and protect patients from premature debt
6 collection actions.

7 **Summary of Provisions**

8 **Section 1: Definitions**

9 Hospital refers to any facility licensed as a hospital or medical facility under the
10 State of Rhode Island or any freestanding emergency room or outpatient surgical
11 center.

12 Itemized Bill refers to a written statement that provides a detailed list of every
13 medical service, procedure, treatment, medication, supply, and facility fee provided
14 to the patient. This list must include:

15 - A plain-language description of each item. (Simpler Words)

16 - The internal billing code used for each item.

17 - The specific amount charged for each item.

18 - Adjustments applied by insurance, financial assistance, or discounts.

19 Patient refers to an individual who has received medical care or treatment at a
20 hospital, or the authorized representative or guarantor of such an individual.

21 **Section 2: Provisions**

22 (a) Requirement. A hospital shall provide an itemized bill to every patient for whom
23 the hospital provides inpatient or outpatient services.

24 (b) Timeline. The itemized bill must be provided to the patient:

25 1. No later than thirty (30) days after the date of discharge; or

26 2. No later than seven (7) days after a specific request is made by the patient,
27 whichever is earlier.

28 (c) Format. The itemized bill must be:

29 1. Written in plain language understandable to the average consumer.

30 2. Provided via the patient's preferred method of delivery (secure electronic portal,
31 email, or First-Class Mail) at no additional cost to the patient.

32 3. Distinct and separate from a summary ""Explanation of Benefits"" or a balance-
33 due statement.

34 (d) Content. The bill must clearly display:

35 1. The date of service for each line item.

36 2. The specific amount billed to the insurance carrier (if applicable).

37 3. The amount due from the patient.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 41

38 4. Contact information for the hospital's billing department to dispute charges or
39 request financial assistance.

40 (e) A hospital, or any third-party debt collector acting on its behalf, shall not
41 engage in any collection activity, report adverse information to a consumer
42 reporting agency, or file a lawsuit to collect a debt until:

43 1. The hospital has provided the patient with the itemized bill as required by
44 Section 3; and

45 2. A period of thirty (30) days has elapsed since the itemized bill was delivered,
46 allowing the patient time to review and dispute charges.

47 (f) If a patient disputes a specific charge in writing, all collection activities regarding
48 that specific charge must be halted until the hospital provides a written response
49 verifying the validity of the charge.

50 (g) The Department of Health [or Attorney General's Office] is authorized to
51 investigate complaints regarding violations of this Act.

52 (h) A hospital found to be in violation of this Act shall be subject to:

53 1. A civil penalty of not more than \$1,000 per violation.

54 2. A requirement to refund any amounts collected from a patient in violation of the
55 billing transparency requirements.

56 (i) A debt collection action initiated in violation of Section 4 shall be deemed void
57 and dismissed with prejudice.

58 **Justification:** Patients often receive medical bills that are opaque, confusing, and
59 lack sufficient detail to verify the accuracy of the charges. The lack of transparency
60 in medical billing prevents consumers from comparing costs, identifying billing
61 errors, and negotiating fair payment. Medical debt is a leading cause of financial
62 instability for families in Rhode Island.

63 **Fiscal Implications:** N/A

64 **Effective Date:** This Act shall take effect on January 1st, 2027, and shall apply to
65 all medical services provided on or after that date.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 42

1 **Sponsors:** Ella Procaccianti

2 **An Act To:** Responsibly Use Artificial Intelligence

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** Monitor and regulate the use of AI within the state by creating a tiered
5 system of AI Risk Classification. Manipulative and harmful forms of AI will be
6 heavily restricted. Use of Artificial Intelligence will be restricted in legal,
7 governmental, and educational institutions._

8 **Summary of Provisions**

9 **Section 1: Definitions**

10 Artificial Intelligence: the application of computer systems able to perform tasks or
11 produce output normally requiring human intelligence, specifically that which
12 generates new content.

13 **Section 2: Provisions**

14 1. The RI State Legislature will adopt an AI Risk Management framework as follows;

15 a. Unacceptable risk systems are banned, specifically;

16 i. AI used for distorting behavior and/or decision-making using deceptive or
17 manipulative techniques,

18 ii. Social or biometric categorization,

19 iii. Compiling facial or biometric databases except

20 1. in cases as necessary by law enforcement to ensure safety and security

21 iv. Interfering with emotions in the workplace or in medical fields.

22 b. AI systems will be defined as high risk if;

23 i. The system is being used as the safety component of critical infrastructure,
24 (ie: traffic regulation, heating, electricity, etc)

25 ii. It is being used to evaluate educational performance or aptitude

26 iii. They are used in governmental operations, including;

27 1. Law enforcement

28 2. Voting

29 3. Legal procedure

30 iv. Produces obscene, degrading, and/or abusive content,

31 v. Communicates with a user without disclosing that it is an AI system or is
32 attempting to imitate a human human

33 vi. Will be regulated as follows;

34 1. Must require users to be above the age of 18 and provide proof of
35 identification to access

36 2. No employees of the Executive branch of the State of Rhode Island will be
37 permitted to use AI in any aspect of their work except



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 42

38 a. When the use of an AI system is necessary to address a safety concern of
39 statewide importance

40 3. Members of the State Legislature must disclose if any piece of their writing or
41 speech has been produced by AI

42 a. If a congressperson is found to be using AI without disclosing,

43 4. They will receive a formal reprimand or censure, whichever would be
44 appropriate, depending on their chamber.

45 5. Limited risk/general use systems will remain unregulated except

46 a. For use in education, by students or faculty

47 6. Non-human entities cannot use or hold professional titles licensed by the Rhode
48 Island Department of Health or the Rhode Island Judiciary

49 **Justification:** The state is currently preparing an "AI Task Force" that will
50 seamlessly integrate artificial intelligence into all aspects of Rhode Islander's lives,
51 business, and government. As we continue to prioritize efficiency, we are at risk of
52 losing our most valuable quality: our humanity. Artificial Intelligence has grown
53 exponentially in recent years, with most Americans saying that they would like
54 "more control over how AI is used in their lives" (61%), Pew Research Center. And
55 that is what this bill offers. A chance for Rhode Islanders to control the use of AI by
56 its government officials, to protect licensed professionals, and to mitigate the risk
57 associated with some of AI's most harmful programs.

58 This bill does not seek to ban Artificial Intelligence, but to regulate and ensure that
59 when it is being used, it's being used responsibly.

60 **Fiscal Implications:** The main implication of this bill, fiscal or otherwise, would be
61 to decrease AI use and AI dependence across industries in the State of Rhode
62 Island. There is an extremely limited cost associated with this bill because most of
63 the provisions are regulatory, ie, prohibiting AI from holding professional titles, or
64 enforced on a case-by-case basis by the judiciary, ie, AI found to have violated high
65 or unacceptable-risk guidelines. Restriction of AI use prevents the phenomenon of
66 AI replacement from devastating local economies and individual workers. Fewer
67 people will be losing their jobs, fewer local businesses will be devastated by AI use,
68 and our statewide economy will be more resilient and less dependent on Artificial
69 Intelligence.

70 **Environmental Implications:** The application of this Bill would decrease AI
71 reliance, leading to benefits for the natural environment from the decreased use of
72 water and energy resources allocated to Artificial Intelligence.

73 In relation to the human aspect of the environment, decreasing AI use statewide
74 will help to decrease AI use locally, especially in schools and places of business.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 42

75 This will lead to an emphasis on human connection and innovation in the workplace
76 and classroom. The government will be more focused on and able to cater to the
77 needs of humanity by preventing the divide between intelligence and humanity
78 from growing any further.

79 **Effective Date:** Jan 1st, 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 43

1 **Sponsors:** Rylie Whitten

2 **An Act To:** Maintain the Vaccine Schedule for Children Recommended by the
3 American Academy of Pediatrics and the Rhode Island Department of Health

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** This bill will ensure that the vaccine schedule recommended for children
6 remains consistent with the recommendations of the American Academy of
7 Pediatrics and the Rhode Island Department of Health, as opposed to the Centers of
8 Disease Control and Prevention. Recently, the CDC has changed their recommended
9 vaccine schedule, reducing universal vaccine recommendations from 17 to 11
10 different diseases, with diseases such as HPV, Chickenpox, and Polio left excluded.
11 They also divided the need for vaccines into 3 new categories; Universally
12 Recommended, High Risk Groups, and Shared Clinical Decision-Making; and
13 reduced the original dosage for certain vaccines, such as HPV. The vaccine schedule
14 recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics is based on scientific
15 evidence on immunology, while the guidelines implemented by the CDC have
16 strayed from said evidence and have the potential to put Rhode Island citizens at
17 risk of disease. This bill would protect the state of Rhode Island's right to determine
18 their vaccine schedule guidelines based on the scientific evidence provided by the
19 AAP and the Rhode Island Department of Health.

20 **Summary of Provisions**

21 Section 1: Definitions

22 AAP- American Academy of Pediatrics

23 CDC- Centers of Disease Control and Prevention

24 Recommended Vaccine Schedule: A timed plan for doses of vaccines based on
25 scientific research

26 Universally Recommended: Recommended for all children

27 High Risk Groups: Recommended for those with specific conditions

28 Shared Clinical Decision-Making: Recommendations for vaccines like COVID-19, Flu,
29 Rotavirus,

30 Hepatitis A/B, and Meningococcal, requiring parent-doctor discussions

31 MMR: Measles, Mumps, and Rubella Vaccine

32 Section 2: Provisions

33 This bill allows the Rhode Island Department of Health to follow the vaccine
34 schedule recommended by the AAP as opposed to the schedule recommended by
35 the CDC

36 The Rhode Island Department of Health will subsequently be able to issue guidance
37 to healthcare providers on when vaccines should be administered, and which
38 vaccines should be considered high-priority based on scientific evidence



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 43

39 **Justification:** Within the past few years, researchers have been able to connect an
40 increase in the spread of diseases to a decrease in vaccinations throughout the
41 country. The vaccination rates for children have declined from 95% to about 92-
42 93% since 2019, well below the 95% needed to maintain herd immunity. There has
43 been a resurgence in diseases long dormant within the community, such as
44 measles, mumps, and polio. Ensuring that children are vaccinated at the
45 appropriate age, time, and dosage, and that non-medical exemptions are strictly
46 regulated, is essential to maintaining the herd immunity that protects our
47 community from diseases. Changes to the vaccine schedule place the health of
48 Rhode Islanders at risk and can place an undue burden on the state's public health
49 system. The American Academy of Pediatrics is a well respected organization
50 composed of leaders in the field of pediatric medicine, epidemiology, and infectious
51 disease, and therefore, the state of Rhode Island should take their recommended
52 guidelines extremely seriously.

53 **Fiscal Implications:** This bill has no fiscal implications.

54 **Environmental Implications:** This bill will reduce the risk of several diseases such
55 as measles, hepatitis, HPV, and influenza for citizens of Rhode Island.

56 **Effective Date:** 1/1/2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 44

1 **Sponsors:** Gabe Girard

2 **An Act To:** Modernize Consumer Protection Standards for Subscription Services

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** If enacted, this bill will ensure full transparency in day to day consumer
5 transactions through clear disclosure of subscription terms. Automatic renewal
6 services will be more consumer focused, guaranteeing meaningful, informed
7 consent before any charges are applied. The bill also intends to heighten
8 cancellation standards for subscriptions, legislating the process to a far more fair
9 and reasonable level and no more difficult than enrollment.

10 **Summary of Provisions**

11 Section 1: Definitions

12 Subscription Service: A service in which a consumer is charged on a recurring basis
13 for a service until the consumer takes action to cancel it.

14 Automatic Renewal: Subscription Service provision that automatically extends the
15 consumers agreement for a period of time.

16 Consumer: Person who enters a subscription service.

17 Affirmative Consent: Express, informed, consent from the consumer, that clearly
18 indicates agreement to terms and recurring charges.

19 Dark-Patterns: User interface features that have a misleading, manipulative, or
20 impairing effect on the consumer's ability to cancel a subscription or make an
21 informed decision and purchase when entering a subscription. This includes pre-
22 checked boxes, confusing or misleading statements on cancellation, difficult to
23 navigate interface meant to discourage cancellation, and hard to locate or hidden
24 cancellation options or terms.

25 Free trial: Promotional period where consumers are offered subscription service free
26 of charge.

27 Section 2: Provisions i.) Companies that provide subscription services must also
28 provide clear terms and conditions for said subscription service. Terms and
29 conditions must indicate clearly, in dollar amount, the recurring charge, how often
30 it is charged, and the exact service provided.

31 a.) Companies must display any other subscription options alongside the service
32 being offered. Any comparable service ought to be displayed.

33 b.) Terms and conditions should be easily accessible and sent to a consumer's email
34 address. If not applicable, there should be an option for the terms and conditions to
35 be mailed to the consumer's address.

36 ii.) Subscription service's cancellation processes ought to be at least as simple as
37 the processes to subscribe.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 44

- 38 a.) For example, if a consumer subscribes to a service via an online interface, there
39 should be an equally accessible online interface to unsubscribe.
- 40 iii.) Dark Patterns are not to be used or involved in the user interface at any level of
41 the subscription cancellation process.
- 42 a.) This includes language deemed to be confusing, pre-checked boxes, hidden or
43 hard to navigate systems of accessing terms and conditions or subscription
44 cancellation, or anything else that is deemed to discourage cancellation or access of
45 terms and conditions.
- 46 b.) Terms and conditions need to have a readable summary, without using
47 confusing language, that the average consumer should be able to understand.
- 48 iv.) Companies who offer automatic renewal subscription services that charge on a
49 consistent basis must offer easily accessible reminders before and after charges are
50 applied to the consumer.
- 51 a.) For example, if a consumer has an automatic renewal subscription to a monthly
52 wine delivery service, the company providing the service must provide the
53 consumer with sufficient notice beforehand, be it e-mail, or another method that
54 the consumer and company agree upon, that there is a charge for the service
55 approaching.
- 56 b.) In this example, there also must be a notice after a charge is applied, and that
57 notice must contain the date of the next charge.
- 58 c.) Notices must contain easy access to the cancellation interface.
- 59 v.) Companies must receive clear and affirmative consent from the consumer
60 before applying any charges.
- 61 a.) This includes free trials. The consumer ought to have read and agreed fully to
62 any terms and conditions before a charge is applied.
- 63 vi.) Violations will result in civil penalty of 3% of the revenue generated by the
64 offending subscription services in the state of Rhode Island during the period where
65 the offenses took place.
- 66 a.) Companies can receive up to 8% penalty for repeated or willful violations.
- 67 b.) Consumers ought to be allowed refunds and restitution in the event that they
68 are wronged.
- 69 c.) Discretion for violations is up to the state Attorney General's office.
- 70 **Justification:** Subscription services are a benign part of nearly every average
71 Rhode Islanders day to day life, yet legislation around the companies that facilitate
72 these services is relatively flimsy. Consumer protection laws do exist, but they
73 largely can't keep up with the rapidly changing online subscription market. This bill
74 aims to increase transparency with consumers, and catch up to this rapidly evolving



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 44

75 market. Many people subscribe to services without knowing fully what they are
76 subscribing to, or how to cancel it once they are bought in. Once they have signed
77 up, many consumers forget that they have even subscribed, and end up spending
78 valuable money on services that they don't use. This bill will fix that.

79 **Fiscal Implications:** Civil penalties would increase the state budget on a relatively
80 small margin. Companies would have to adjust their services to fit the bill, and
81 would lose a marginal amount of profit.

82 **Environmental Implications:** In the event that a consumer wants a paper copy of
83 terms and conditions mailed to them, more paper could be used. This would be
84 marginal.

85 **Effective Date:** October 1, 2027, Start of the Fiscal Year.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 45

1 **Sponsors:** Jeremy Rice and Sophie Lee Rice

2 **An Act To:** Limit A.I. Usage in Public Schools.

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** To limit the amount of generative A.I. used by teachers, students, and
5 staff in public schools.

6 **Summary of Provisions**

7 Section 1: Definitions

8 Generative A.I. refers to a type of artificial intelligence that creates media with little
9 to no human input, such as text, images, videos, etc.

10 Public Schools refers to any K-12 schools that receive the majority of their funding
11 from local, state, or federal government.

12 Section 2: Provisions This bill aims to stop the use of Generative A.I. by blocking
13 A.I. websites on school WiFi and school-issued technology, including the technology
14 used by teachers.

15 (a). Schools shall have created a plan to limit or restrict the use of A.I. on their
16 school WiFi.

17 (1). This shall be outlined in the school rules and student handbook.

18 (2). Schools shall issue consequences to students that do not follow the A.I. ban.

19 (i). Punishments for A.I. use shall be the same as the punishments used for
20 plagiarism.

21 **Justification:** Allowing Artificial Intelligence in schools, specifically Generative A.I.,
22 brings up questions of academic integrity and complicates the teacher's task of
23 discerning students' genuine work to plagiarism.

24 (a). By having Generative A.I. accessible to students, learning real world skills are
25 taken away when using A.I., e.g. the problem solving skills of figuring complex
26 problems and the ability to argue your opinions in an academic setting.

27 (i). If we continue to let Public Schools operate without a set limit on Generative
28 A.I., our students will be stunted in academic areas needed to go into the
29 workforce.

30 (b). By limiting our teachers' use of A.I., our students can learn properly without
31 the risk of A.I. teaching them incorrect information and protects the important
32 connection between teacher and student.

33 **Fiscal Implications:** Training shall be required of each teacher employed by
34 schools affected by this bill

35 (a). Teachers shall learn the best ways to spot AI and how to deter students away
36 from it.

37 (b). For this training, the local government should allocate \$170 per teacher or
38 \$2500 dollars for each school, whichever is less.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 4 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 45

39 **Environmental Implications:** The limit of A.I. usage in schools will mitigate the
40 amount of fresh water used by A.I. servers, which will lower the state's impact in
41 the current climate change crisis.

42 **Effective Date:** This legislation will take effect on August 30, 2026 or the
43 beginning of the 2026-2027 School Year.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 46

1 **Sponsors:** Aaron Corbin and Lucas Martins

2 **An Act To:** Raise Taxes On Junk Food

3 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

4 **Purpose:** Our bill proposes the statewide tax on all junk food products to
5 discourage the purchases and overconsumption of these junk food items, and
6 promote a healthier image for the people of our state.

7 **Summary of Provisions**

8 **Section 1: Definitions**

9 Junk Food/Taxed food- Foods that contain high levels of fat, salt or sugar, but lack
10 nutrients such as fibre, vitamins and minerals.

11 Salted food - 1 gram of salt per 100 grams

12 Sugar-Sweetened beverages - Ready to drink beverages with the syrups and
13 powders to produce them. Exempts 100% natural fruit, vegetable juice, milk
14 products, or beverages for medical use.

15 Exempt food - Foods that are essential in a well balanced meal and contain the rich
16 nutrients the taxed food lacks.

17 Distributor - Any person, manufactures and wholesale dealers included, who
18 receives, stores, bottles, and distributes the taxed food to retailers who now will
19 have to pay the tax.

20 Tier 1 - Junk food items that are comparatively not as unhealthy. Added sugar 8-
21 15 grams, sodium between 300-500 mg, saturated fat between 3-5 grams.

22 Tier 2 - Junk food items that fall between not as unhealthy and very
23 unhealthy. Added sugar 16-25 grams or 501-800 mg of sodium, or 6-8 grams of
24 saturated fat per serving.

25 Tier 3 - Very unhealthy junk food items. More than 25 grams of added sugar, or
26 more than 800 mg sodium, or more than 8g saturated fat per serving.

27 **Section 2: Provisions** A taxation system based on tiers shall be imposed on all junk
28 food in Rhode Island. Tier 1 junk foods shall be taxed at a 5% rate. Tier 2 junk
29 foods shall be taxed at a 10% rate. Tier 3 junk foods shall be taxed at a 15% rate.
30 Under this bill, retailers are required to clearly display the tax on all receipts as to
31 clearly notify the consumer of the tax they are paying.

32 This Act will also set in place provisions to review and update the defined junk food,
33 as studies and research is done. The Interagency Food and Nutrition Policy Advisory
34 Council and Rhode Island Center for Food Safety shall be responsible to evaluate
35 the tax and inform consumers on revenue changes and outcomes if the provisions
36 of this Act are amended.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 5 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 46

37 Violation of the provisions of this Act will be enforced through a stage-based
38 system, containing three stages of offenses. The penalties faced by a distributor if
39 tax is not enforced include;

40 First offense, fine up to \$2,500;

41 Second offense, fine up to \$5,000;

42 Third and subsequent offenses, fine up to \$10,000.

43 **Justification:** With this bill in place and the money allocated because of it, it aims
44 to improve the general health of the state, and to prevent the addiction of junk
45 food in the future, resulting in a cycle that can be dangerous towards the
46 consumer.

47 This bill should be in place because of;

48 - Rise of obesity rates;

49 - Unhealthiness of the nation;

50 - Deterring people from people buying;

51 - Less addiction;

52 - Funds going elsewhere will allow for the dept. of health to improve, there will be
53 an improvement of health across the board.

54 It is a fact that obesity levels in America are high and they are rising. These
55 obesity levels pose a serious threat to our nation's health, and it is no surprise that
56 these junk food items are the culprit. Rhode Island is no exception to these
57 statistics, as 30% of all of Rhode Island is obese. This obese caused by junk food
58 leads to chronic illnesses and an overall shorter life span. By implementing this bill
59 we hope to deter Rhode Islanders from buying junk food items which will lead to
60 less intake of unnecessary fat, salt and sugar. Deterring people from buying these
61 items will also decrease the likelihood of getting addicted to such items because it
62 has been proven in multiple studies that junk foods trigger the same pleasure and
63 rewards centers as something like nicotine and alcohol.

64 **Fiscal Implications:** Collected taxes shall be accrued by the Rhode Island Division
65 of Taxation under the Rhode Island Department of Revenue.

66 **Effective Date:** This bill shall go into effect on January 1, 2027.



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 47

1 **Sponsors:** Inara Gardner

2 **An Act To:** Align Rhode Island's Minimum Wage to the Inflation Rate (AKA The
3 Living Wage Act)

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** To protect Rhode Island residents and their families from living in
6 poverty.

7 **Summary of Provisions**

8 **Section 1: Definitions**

9 Minimum Wage - the lowest hourly, daily, or monthly remuneration that employers
10 can legally pay workers for their labor, as established by state laws.

11 Inflation - the increase in prices for goods and services across an economy over
12 time, which reduces the purchasing power of money/wages.

13 Poverty - the state of lacking sufficient income, resources, and access to basic
14 necessities—such as food, clean water, shelter, and healthcare—needed for a
15 minimum standard of living.

16 Standard of Living - the level of wealth, comfort, material goods, and necessities
17 available to a specific geographic area.

18 Living Wage - the minimum hourly pay required for a full-time worker to meet their
19 family's basic needs—such as food, housing, healthcare, transportation, and
20 clothing—without relying on public or private financial assistance, as determined by
21 the the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Living Wage Calculator.

22 Consumer Price Index (CPI) - a key economic indicator updated monthly by the US
23 Bureau of Labor Statistics that measures the average change over time in prices
24 paid by urban consumers for a representative ""basket"" of goods and services,
25 such as food, housing, transportation, and medical care.

26 **Section 2: Provisions** This bill requires Rhode Island's minimum wage to increase by
27 one-seventh of the difference between the current minimum wage (\$16.00 per
28 hour) and the living wage (currently set at \$25.01 by the MIT Living Wage
29 Calculator, based on the CPI), until the Rhode Island Minimum Wage is equal to the
30 MIT Living Wage; this is equivalent to an increase in the minimum wage by \$1.29
31 per year for the next seven years. In the seventh year the increase must be equal
32 to the Living Wage as such in that year, and then each following year the minimum
33 wage shall increase to match the MIT Living Wage or the Consumer Price Index,
34 whichever is higher. In no year shall the minimum wage decrease without an
35 amendment to this legislation.

36 **Justification:** This legislation is necessary to help end poverty in Rhode Island,
37 due to the minimum wage being significantly less than what has been calculated for
38 the basic standard of living to meet the criteria of a living wage. It will decrease the



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 1 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 47

39 need for working class Rhode Islanders to rely on private or government assisted
40 programs in order to meet their basic needs of food, housing, healthcare,
41 transportation, and clothing.
42 In addition, scholars at the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research have
43 identified additional benefits of incremental increases in the minimum wage as this.
44 "Historically, minimum wage increases were large, one-shot changes imposed with
45 little advance notice for businesses. But many recent... minimum wage increases
46 have been scheduled to be implemented over time and often are indexed to some
47 measure of price inflation. These small, scheduled minimum wage hikes seem to
48 have smaller effects on prices than large, one-time increases. ...[L]ooking at
49 changes in restaurant food pricing during the period of 1978–2015...prices rose by
50 just 0.36 percent for every 10 percent increase in the minimum wage...only about
51 half the size reported in previous studies. They also observe that small minimum
52 wage increases do not lead to higher prices and may actually reduce prices.
53 Furthermore, it is also possible that small minimum wage increases could lead to
54 increased employment in low-wage labor markets (MacDonald and Nilsson, 2016)
55 **Fiscal Implications:** Businesses, especially in competitive markets with low profit
56 margins, will need to raise prices to cover higher labor costs. Research shows that
57 prices may rise slightly; however phasing-in the increase over the course of seven
58 years allows businesses to adjust gradually, mitigating the need for drastic,
59 immediate price hikes. This legislation is projected to increase state payroll taxes
60 each year, and as income increases fewer people will be reliant on state and federal
61 welfare programs which will reduce the need for public aid.
62 **Effective Date:** January 1, 2027



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 48

1 **Sponsors:** Adam Barboza

2 **An Act To:** Reduce Years of Expungement Eligibility of Misdemeanors & Petty
3 Misdemeanors

4 *The People of the State of Rhode Island, represented in the Senate and Assembly do enact as follows:*

5 **Purpose:** To erase small crime records, to fiscally enable petty offenders, to
6 eradicate crime-inflicted impoverishedness.

7 **Summary of Provisions**

8 Section 1: Definitions

9 Expungement – the legal erasure of past offenses, whether misdemeanor, felony,
10 violent crime, or petty.

11 Expungement Eligibility – the legal criteria to remove one’s crimes from a public
12 record.

13 Misdemeanor – a criminal offense finable up to one thousand, and confinable to one
14 year in prison.

15 Petty misdemeanor – criminal offense punishable by no more than a half a year’s
16 sentence in prison, and half a thousand dollars.

17 Section 2: Provisions

18 I. A reduction in expungibility for petty misdemeanors and standard
19 misdemeanors by four years, which allows for sufficient time of sentencing.

20 II. A reduction in expungement process from a six-twelve month range to a three-
21 six month range.

22 III. A reduction in fining for petty misdemeanors to no more than two hundred and
23 fifty dollars, and standard misdemeanors to no more than eight hundred dollars.

24 IV. To reduce maximum probation time to only half the imprisonment period.

25 V. Rhode Island Law Statutes T. 11 (Criminal Offenses) shall be amended
26 to accommodate for the abovesaid provisions.

27 **Justification:** In areas of destitution, crime is rampant, since as Aristotle says,
28 poverty is the mother of crime. Small crime is caused most frequently in the poorer
29 areas, mostly in the suburbs of Providence, or in the capital itself. Those who we
30 punish for these crimes commit these acts out of their poor situation, and it is of no
31 help to them whatsoever by keeping them weighed down for years when they make
32 one simple fault. This state of ours has both some of the longest expungement
33 waiting periods and probation periods. By a reduction of both, we would enable a
34 more meritocratic and unrigid system of law, which destroys crime-inflicted
35 poverty. Further, a reduction in prices helps to alleviate their financial obligations,
36 and give them more fiscal capacity for and legal access to employment,
37 transactions, services, or property. There is an old adage from Cicero,



Rhode Island YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCAYAG/RI.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: 3 Chamber Assignment: Senate Bill #: 48

38 a Roman statesman; 'let the welfare of the people be the ultimate law,'
39 something sought here by a reduction in crime, and the poverty therefrom.
40 **Fiscal Implications:** A reduction in revenue from fines that are amended by this
41 bill.
42 **Effective Date:** 3 March 2027