**Upcoming Election Update – Important Information!!!**

This year’s elections are extremely important to the business community. In many cases, the only contested races will take place in the **Primary election September 12, 2018**. In order to vote in a party’s primary election, you must either be a member of that party or unaffiliated (independent) and be registered to vote in the district where you live.

If you would like to have more choices on who to vote for in the Primary Election, it is recommended that you register as “unaffiliated” so that you can choose which primary to vote in depending who is running in the Primary. **The deadline for disaffiliating is June 14, 2018**.

To register to vote, check your affiliation, or to change to “unaffiliated,” go to <https://vote.sos.ri.gov/> and have your driver’s license in hand.

Also, as stated previously in UTD, anyone wishing to run for office must file a Declaration of Candidacy Form with the Local Board of Canvassers in the City or Town in which you reside. Forms can be filed June 24th, 25th or 26th. Last week, Senator Paul Fogarty (Burrillville, Glocester and North Smithfield) announced he will not seek re-election.

**An Update from the State House**

**Last Week At the State House**

Both **H.7251 SubA** (Rep. Phillips, Solomon, Casey, Morin, Corvese) and **S.2763SubA** (Sen. Picard) passed the final committees last week and are both awaiting final floor votes. These bills allow an individual who is applying for a commercial driver’s license (CDL), or renewing a CDL, to submit the medical examiner’s certificate to the Department of Motor Vehicles by electronic transmission. The bills require the DMV to add a menu item to its website to allow for the electronic submission of the required medical document.

**This Week At the State House**

On **Wednesday**, the **Senate Committee on Environment and Energy** will be taking testimony on **S.2747** (Senators Euer, Coyne, Miller, Sosnowski and Calkin). S.2747 creates the Rhode Island Global Warming Solutions Act, which establishes legally enforceable emission reductions in the state of 20% below 1990 levels by 2025 (reduction of 2.496 million metric tons); 50% below 1990 levels by 2035 (reduction of additional 3.744 million metric tons); 70% below 1990 levels by 2045 (reduction of additional 2.496 million metric tons) and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 (reduction of additional 1.248 million metric tons).

To accomplish these goals, the Office of Energy Resources – must within 1 year promulgate rules for the electricity sector they feel are necessary to reach the 2025 goals. OER can include any Market-based Compliance Mechanism in its plan such as a large carbon tax or a cap and trade system. The Department of Transportation – must within 1 year promulgate rules necessary to achieve the emission reduction goals. Like OER, DOT can utilize Market-based Compliance Mechanisms, but the bill also appears to require the regulations to include a 5% requirement for electric vehicles sales by 2025, 40% electric vehicles by 2035, and 95% by 2050.

The State Building Commissioner must, within 1 year, promulgate rules for state building codes to meet emission reduction. New buildings would have to comply with the regulations 1 year after the rules are promulgated. Existing buildings would have to be heated solely by electricity by 2050. Ten percent of buildings heated by oil or propane would have to be switched to electric heat by 2025. No new building with a shovel in the ground on or after January 1, 2035 could be heated with oil or propane. By 2050, all RI buildings must be converted to electric heat.

Lastly, S.2747 allows any person to file an action in Providence County Superior Court should the regulations not be promulgated in a way that meets the targets.

**Wednesday** the **House Finance Committee** will hear testimony on one of the **Governor’s budget amendment** requests. The Article request would “maintain the use of the federal personal income tax exemption amounts in effect prior to the passage of the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act for the purpose of computing personal income tax liability owed to the state for tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2018.”

The **House Finance Committee** will also take testimony on **H.8122** (Reps. Abney, Marshall and Ruggiero) which is similar to an Article in the Governor’s original budget. H.8122 <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText18/HouseText18/H8122.pdf> eliminates red tape requirements on various business entities such as, common carriers, mobile homes, manufacture wholesalers, barbers, hairdressers, manicurists, optometrists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, mental health counselors, marriage therapists and massage therapists.

**House Labor** will meet **Thursday** in Room 101 at the Rise to consider **H.8179** (Reps. McEntee and Craven). H.8179 allows and employee to substitute any accrued paid vacation, sick or other paid leave for any part of parental leave or family leave that would otherwise be unpaid.

**Senate Finance** will take testimony at the Rise in Room 211 concerning a few **budget amendment requests** including the same personal income tax article scheduled for hearing in the House Finance Committee on Wednesday.

**S.2058** (Senators Calkin, Quezada, Satchell, Euer and Goldin) will also be heard at the **Senate Finance** meeting. This bill establishes a surtax on the business corporation tax for publicly traded corporations subject to SEC disclosure and reporting requirements. For tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2018, a surtax of 10% on the amount of the tax owed will be added if a corporation reports a pay ratio of at least one hundred to one (100:1) but less than two hundred fifty to one (250:1) on U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission disclosures. The surtax jumps to 25% if a corporation reports a pay ratio of two hundred fifty to one (250:1) or greater on U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission disclosures.

The following bills were filed last week:

House Bill No. [8234](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText18/HouseText18/H8234.pdf)

**BY**  Kennedy, O`Grady, Ucci, O'Brien

**ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO INSURANCE -- TRAVEL INSURANCE ACT (Creates the "Travel Insurance Act" to establish a comprehensive and uniform regulatory framework to clarify current applicable law applicable to travel insurance policies.)

House Bill No. [8242](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText18/HouseText18/H8242.pdf)

**BY**  Messier, Johnston, Tobon, Coughlin

**ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- HEALTH AND SAFETY--ALTERNATIVE PAYMENT INCENTIVE FOR CERTAIN ELIGIBLE HOSPITALS (Establishes a formula to create a transitional alternative payment method incentive to be used in calculating reimbursement rates that must be paid by health insurance carriers to eligible Rhode Island hospitals.)

House Bill No. [8245](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText18/HouseText18/H8245.pdf)

**BY**  Messier, Johnston, Tobon, Coughlin

**ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- HOSPITAL CLOSURE TRANSITION ACT (Creates the "Hospital Closure Transition Act which would facilitate the acquisition of a closed hospital's assets by an existing hospital by exempting the acquisition from the hospital conversions and health care facilities licensing acts.)