**A New Session Begins**

Welcome to the first Under the Dome of 2022. Please watch your email as the Chamber will now be sending weekly updates on Mondays. We expect the legislative session to begin slowly as both the House and Senate attempt to deal with the latest surge of Covid in Rhode Island. For now, meetings will be held remotely or in a hybrid fashion, allowing the public to participate from home. Next week, the House and Senate will meet on Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. for bill introductions and announcements.

Key dates for 2022 include the following:

Last day for House & Senate public bill introduction – February 10, 2022

Winter Recess – February 21-25, 2022

Spring Recess – April 18-22, 2022

The House adopted a new rule last year, which now takes effect. Each Representative has the ability to designate three of his/her 2021 bills to remain alive in 2022. Those bills will be assigned new 2022 numbers, reference the old 2021 number, and will pick up where the bill left off in 2021. For example, if 2021 H.1234 had a hearing in 2021 but was never voted on by the committee, that bill may now become 2022 H.3456 and can be brought up by the committee for a vote in 2022 with 48 hour posting notice. No additional hearing would be required in 2022. The maximum number of bills that could be in this new category is 225 (75 state representative times 3). If you have an interest in a carryover bill, it is important to contact the Chamber quickly. The Senate has NOT adopted the same rule. All Senate bills will be scheduled for a hearing in 2022 prior to committee passage. However, the Senate has passed bills the same day as a hearing; particularly bills that were passed by a committee in the previous year.

**2021 Supplemental Budget Passed**

Before formally closing out the 2021 session on January 4th, the legislature passed a supplemental budget allocating a portion of the federal funds that were given to the State. H.6494 Sub A <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/HouseText21/H6494A.pdf> was quickly signed into law by the Governor. The following is a list of approved authorizations contained in the legislation. Keep in mind that agencies will have to promulgate rules regarding the new programs prior to distributing funds for their purposes listed:

* $32 million in financial and technical assistance to small business. Small business is defined as a business with less than $1 million in annual gross revenues that can demonstrate a negative impact from the Covid pandemic. Grants cannot exceed $10,000 per eligible business through any single program and cannot exceed $20,000 in the aggregate to any single business. Twenty-percent of the funds are reserved for minority businesses. RI Commerce Corporation is responsible for establishing the rules in relation to this program. The $32 million is divided as follows: $12.5 million for direct payments to businesses for lost revenue; $10.5 million for technical assistance for long-term business capacity building; $7.5 million for capital improvements for public health upgrades and outdoor programming; and $1.5 million for the administration of these programs.
* $13 million for hospitality and tourism assistance of which $8 million shall be allocated for direct payments for lost revenue; $3 million for public space and outdoor capital improvements; and $2 million for tourism marketing
* $15 million for affordable housing units
* $12 million for the acquisition of properties for redevelopment as affordable housing
* $1.5 million to expand housing navigation and mental health services
* $500,000 for the administration of affordable housing programs
* $500,000 for broadband services
* $7.5 million for pediatric providers in response to decline in visitations and to increase developmental and psychosocial behavioral screenings
* $5.5 million for early intervention providers, family home visitations and screenings
* $12.5 million for DCYF to provide work stabilization supplemental wage payments of up to $700 per month and retention bonuses
* $19 million for the Department of Human Services to pay semi-annual retention bonuses of up to $1500 for direct care staff at childcare centers and licensed family providers

**CHAMBER MEMBER ACTION REQUEST - Preparations for 2022 Session**

With the new House rule, and the potential to be meeting remotely for a period of time,

**the Chamber may be calling you, asking for your assistance as we prepare for this new session.** Please go to <https://vote.sos.ri.gov> and click on “Find Your Elected Officials.” Enter zip code and address. Find your “Representative District” legislator and your “Senate District” legislator (if you live in Rhode Island). Email your name and the legislators name to lpalagi@nrichamber.com. The Chamber will be compiling a database for future grassroots efforts. If you also know, a legislator who lives in another district, please send that information to the Chamber as well and we will include it in the database.

**Thank you for your help!**

The following new bills have been filed:

Senate Bill No. [2014](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2014.pdf) Kallman, DiMario, Murray, Valverde, Ruggerio, Burke, Ciccone, DiPalma, Euer, Miller **ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC FINANCE -- RHODE ISLAND SECURE CHOICE RETIREMENT SAVINGS PROGRAM ACT (Establishes the Rhode Island secure choice retirement savings program as a public corporation managing IRA-type investments. Requires employers to offer the program to employees or be subject to a $250 penalty per employee.)

House Bill No. [6605](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6605.pdf) Amore **ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- SALES AND USE TAXES -- LIABILITY AND COMPUTATION (Same as 21H-5364 -- Extends the sales tax exemption of a manufacturer who processes raw materials into finished goods.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6605.pdf>

House Bill No. [6628](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6628.pdf) Filippi **ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO CORPORATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, AND PARTNERSHIPS -- THE RHODE ISLAND LIMITED-LIABILITY COMPANY ACT (Same as 21H-5348 --Permits a member or members of a limited-liability company to avoid dissolution by buying the units owned by the other member or members seeking dissolution.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6628.pdf>

House Resolution No. [6646](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6646.pdf) McGaw, Cassar, Kislak, Morales, Potter, Felix, Ajello, Cortvriend, Henries, Donovan **ENTITLED,**HOUSE RESOLUTION RESPECTFULLY URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO PASS LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING AN IMPROVED "MEDICARE FOR ALL" SINGLE PAYER PROGRAM THAT WOULD PROVIDE UNIVERSAL, COMPREHENSIVE AND AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE (Same as 21H-6078--) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6646.pdf>

House Bill No. [6647](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6647.pdf) McGaw, Vella-Wilkinson, Baginski, Fellela, Alzate, Shekarchi, Kislak, Ackerman, Ajello, Cassar **ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO INSURANCE -- MEDICAL INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR EPINEPHRINE INJECTORS (Same as 21H-5463--Requires group health plans and health insurance issuers that provide prescription benefits to cover prescribed epinephrine injectors and cartridges/No copayment or deductible would be required to obtain a prescribed epinephrine injector) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6647.pdf>

House Bill No. [6650](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6650.pdf)  Nardone, Chippendale, Place, Quattrocchi, Price **ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- ESTABLISHING AN OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL (Same as 21H-5795--Establishes the office of inspector general as an independent administrative agency charged with the responsibility to investigate, detect, and prevent fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement in the expenditure of public funds.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6650.pdf>

House Bill No. [6652](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6652.pdf)  Noret, Casimiro, Vella-Wilkinson, Alzate, Solomon, Craven, Amore, Casey, Lima, Lombardi **ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN (Same as 21H-5619 -- Requires children who seek a special limited work permit to successfully complete a training program which shall address workers' rights, workplace health and safety, and workers' compensation, to be established and funded by the DLT.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6652.pdf>

House Bill No. [6658](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6658.pdf) Phillips, Caldwell, Noret, O'Brien, Serpa, Hawkins, Lima

**ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- STATE TAX OFFICIALS (Same as 21H-5213 -- Changes the rate of interest for underpayments of tax to prime rate plus six percent (6%). Also limits the assessment of interest to four (4) calendar years prior to the date on which notice of the delinquent payment is sent.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6658.pdf>

House Bill No. [6659](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6659.pdf) Phillips, Caldwell, Carson, Cortvriend, Fellela, Casey, Filippi, Lima **ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO COMMERCIAL LAW -- GENERAL REGULATORY PROVISIONS -- UNFAIR SALES PRACTICES (Same as 21H-5769 Sub A --A provider of a club, facility, or services to a consumer must stop automatic deductions from the consumer’s account or credit card within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving a notice to stop from the consumer.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6659.pdf>

House Bill No. [6664](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6664.pdf) Potter, Cassar, Baginski, Morales, Cortvriend, Kislak, McGaw, Tanzi, Giraldo, Ajello **ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- THE RHODE ISLAND HEALTH CARE REFORM ACT OF 2004 -- HEALTH INSURANCE OVERSIGHT (Same as 21H-5772 -- Requires the health insurance commissioner to adopt a uniform set of medical criteria for prior authorization and create a required form to be used by a health insurer.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6664.pdf>

House Bill No. [6670](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6670.pdf) Shallcross Smith **ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- COLLECTION OF TAXES GENERALLY (Same as 21H-6092 -- Prohibits the tax sale of properties when litigation is pending disputing the amount owed.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6670.pdf>

House Bill No. [6676](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6676.pdf) Tobon, Cardillo, Vella-Wilkinson **ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- LEVY AND ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL TAXES (Same as 21H-5634 -- Requires cities and towns to assess renewable energy resources to be taxed as tangible property and the real property on which it is located shall not be reclassified, revalued or reassessed.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H6676.pdf>