**Last Week at the State House**

All of the bills reported to you last week were held for further study, a formal procedure which keeps the bills alive through the remainder of the session (H.7231, An Act Relating to Business Professions – Freedom to Travel and Work Act; S.2124, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Unfair Employment Practices - prohibits an employer from requiring an employee to execute a nondisclosure agreement or non-disparagement agreement; S.2325 requires coverage for Covid-19 home test kits; S.2080 requires coverage for 10 categories of “essential health benefits”; and S.2203 requires coverage for treatment of pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders. The debate over the appropriate amount of ARPA funds to be used to replenish the unemployment trust fund continues. Figures ranging from $30 million to the full reimbursement (approximately $300 million) are in play. If this is an important issue to you, please contact your legislators.

The adult recreational use of marijuana bills were introduced last week. While both the Senate and House leadership teams worked together on H.7593 and S.2430 (links to the bills are provided below), both have said they are open to input from the public. If you have an interest in these bills, please review and send comments to the Chamber as soon as possible. It is likely the hearings for H.7593 and S.2430 will be posted shortly.

**This Week at the State House**

Both the House and Senate are eliminating virtual testimony at hearings beginning this week. Written testimony is always accepted through email or by dropping it off in person. Individuals may also come to the state house – masks are optional – and sign up to verbally testify at the hearing room.

**Tuesday, March 8th**

**The Senate Judiciary Committee** is meeting at the **Rise** (approximately 4:30 p.m.) in **Room 313.**  **S.2093, An Act Relating to Courts and Civil Procedure** – Procedure in Particular Action – Rhode Island Commercial Receivership Act. The bill creates a temporary, non-liquidating receivership program for businesses that experienced a substantial decline in revenue due to Covid or another type of government emergency power action <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2093.pdf>

**S.2104, An Act Relating to Commercial Law**, requires any business that collects a social security number, driver’s license number, a state identification card number, a credit or debit card number, or a health insurance identification number, to create a privacy protection policy and to publicly display that policy. Failure to comply results in a civil penalty of $500 for each violation up to $500,000 for any single event. <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2104.pdf>

If you wish to submit written testimony, it can be emailed to: SLegislation@rilegislature.gov. Please cc: the Chamber of Commerce so that we are aware of your testimony.

**Wednesday, March 9th**

**The House Committee on Health and Human Services** will meet in the **House Lounge at 4:00 p.m.** There are three health care mandates on the hearing calendar. **H.7500, An Act Relating to Insurance** (Requires individual health insurers, large group health insurers and small employer health insurers to provide coverage for essential health benefits listed in the act); **H.7503, An Act Relating to Insurance** (Requires coverage for treatment of pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infections and pediatric acute onset neuropsychiatric syndrome); and **H.7560, An Act Relating to Insurance** (Requires individual health insurers, large group health insurers and small employer health insurers to provide coverage for ten (10) categories of essential health benefits). The Chamber will again request the creation of a Health Care Advisory Committee charged with evaluating all health care mandate proposals to determine cost and benefits.

The **Senate Committee on Labor** meets at **4:00 p.m. in Room 211** to hear testimony, and likely pass **S.2486, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Dignity at Work Act**. The Senate has passed this bill multiple times. The definition of workplace bullying includes: undermine, humiliate, denigrate, or sabotage a person in the workplace; as well as threatening, intimidating, dominating, or otherwise infringing upon a person's right to dignity. Workplace bullying may take the form of interpersonal interactions, organizational practices, or management actions. Workplace bullying may take the form of harassment, incivility, abusive supervision, physical violence, aggressions and “other types of objectionable behaviors.” The behaviors may come from any level of the organization, including supervision, co-workers, subordinates, or customers. Examples of bullying cited in the bill include: Interfering with a person's personal property or work equipment; use of humiliation, personal criticism, ridicule, and demeaning comments; Overbearing or intimidating levels of supervision; Withholding information, supervision, training or resources to prevent someone from doing their job; Changing work arrangements, such as rosters, offices, assignments, leave, and schedules to deliberately inconvenience someone; Isolating, or marginalizing a person from normal work activities; Inconsistently following or enforcing rules, to the detriment of an employee; Unjustifiably excluding colleagues from meetings or communications; and Intruding on a person's privacy by pestering… The bill is very broad and provides the “bullied” employee the ability to sue both the individual(s) involved as well as the employer. Written testimony can be submitted by email to SLegislation@rilegislature.gov To view the actual text of the legislation, go to: <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2486.pdf>

**Thursday, March 10th**

EV chargers in business parking lots will be the topic of discussion in the **Senate Committee on Housing and Municipal Governmen**t in **Room 310 at the Rise** (approximately 4:30 p.m.). **S.2209, An Act Relating to Motor Vehicles – Parking Facilities and Privileges**, requires, starting January 1, 2023, all new parking lots and existing lots that undergo an expansion of the number of parking spaces by 50% or more, to create designated parking spaces for electric vehicles. Each electric vehicle parking space must have either an EV-ready or EV-capable public level 2, or DC fast charger, or a dual port charger to be shared by two parking spaces. The bill goes on to require Commercial buildings (such as box stores, grocery markets, strip malls, shopping malls, shopping centers, and hotels or motels) as well as large employers (defined as having 100 employees or more at a single location) to install EV-ready or EV-capable public level 2, or DC fast charger, or a dual port charger to be shared by two parking spaces in a formula set in the legislation: 0-9 parking spaces = no EV spaces requirements; 10-25 parking spaces = 1 EV space requirement; 26-50 parking spaces = 2 EV required spaces; 51-75 parking spaces = 4 EV required spaces; 76-100 parking spaces = 5 EV required spaces; 101-150 parking spaces = 7 EV required spaces; 151-200 parking spaces = 10 EV required spaces; 201 and over = 6% of total spaces must be EV spaces. Testimony can be submitted via email at SLegislation@rilegislature.gov If you submit testimony, please share it with the Chamber as well. This bill can be viewed at: <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2209.pdf>

The following new bills have been filed:

House Bill No. [7593](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7593.pdf) Slater, Hull, Williams, Kazarian, Solomon, McNamara, O'Brien, Potter, Bennett, Morales**,**AN ACT RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS -- RHODE ISLAND CANNABIS ACT (Establishes the Cannabis Control Commission. Legalizes recreational marijuana possession and use.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7593.pdf>

Senate Bill No. [2430](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2430.pdf) Miller, McCaffrey, Goodwin, Ruggerio, Coyne, Pearson, Acosta, Kallman, Archambault, Murray**,**AN ACT RELATING TO FOOD AND DRUGS -- RHODE ISLAND CANNABIS ACT (Establishes the Cannabis Control Commission. Legalizes recreational marijuana possession and use.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2430.pdf>

House Bill No. [7601](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7601.pdf) Kennedy, Azzinaro, Diaz**,**AN ACT RELATING TO COMMERCIAL LAW -- GENERAL REGULATORY PROVISIONS -- DECEPTIVE TRADE PRACTICES (Prohibits commercial lease provisions limiting ability to subsequently lease to lawful businesses.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7601.pdf>

House Bill No. [7602](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7602.pdf) Giraldo, Place, Alzate, Kazarian, Barros**,**AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- BUSINESS NOTIFICATION ACT (Requires businesses to be notified of any regulatory changes which materially impact the business.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7602.pdf>

House Bill No. [7621](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7621.pdf) Cortvriend, McGaw, Speakman, Carson, Handy, Donovan, Caldwell, Henries, Tanzi, Potter**,**AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS - HOME HEATING GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTION ACT (Creates the Home Heating Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Act which program provides a mechanism and funding for gas companies to transition from providing gas heat to non-emitting renewable thermal energy for home heating consumers.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7621.pdf>

House Bill No. [7622](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7622.pdf) Morales, Henries**,**AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- THE GREEN JUSTICE ZONE ACT (Creates the "green justice zone act" and the "environmental justice act" and makes amendments to several other areas of the general laws designed to create a system to provide clean water and air to the state.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7622.pdf>

House Bill No. [7642](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7642.pdf) Place, Filippi, Price, Nardone, Chippendale, Roberts, Newberry, Quattrocchi**,**AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION - AGREEMENT TO PHASE OUT CORPORATE INCENTIVES COMPACT ACT (Establishes a compact agreement among at least two (2) states to prohibit the use of subsidies to selectively retain industry or company entice relocation from one state to another state or to open a new facility.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7642.pdf>

House Bill No. [7653](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7653.pdf) Cortvriend, Carson, McGaw, Batista, Speakman, Felix, Alzate, Kislak, Tanzi, Potter**,**AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- ELECTRIC TRANSPORTATION ACT (Provides for a plan and structure to transition to green energy in motor and other vehicles.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7653.pdf>

House Bill No. [7654](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7654.pdf) Morales, Kislak, Alzate, Ranglin-Vassell, Lombardi, Potter, Henries, McGaw, Felix, Williams**,**AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- BUSINESS CORPORATION TAX (Eliminates the corporate tax cut and qualified business income deduction created by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7654.pdf>

House Bill No. [7658](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7658.pdf) Costantino, Lima, Vella-Wilkinson**,**AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- ESTATE AND TRANSFER TAXES -- LIABILITY AND COMPUTATION (Phases in an annual increase of the net taxable estate exemption over an eight (8) year period until the state exemption equals the federal exemption.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7658.pdf>

House Bill No. [7659](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7659.pdf) Amore, Alzate, Ajello, Barros, Henries, Morales**,**AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- PERSONAL INCOME TAX (Creates a new income tax bracket for person with taxable income over $500,000 to fund school projects.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7659.pdf>

House Bill No. [7677](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7677.pdf) (Attorney General) Craven, Caldwell**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- PAYMENTS OF WAGES (Increases the criminal penalties for wage theft and employee misclassification.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7677.pdf>

House Bill No. [7717](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7717.pdf) Giraldo, Williams, Alzate, Lima, Morales, Batista, Cassar, Speakman, Kislak, Cortvriend**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- RHODE ISLAND PARENTAL AND FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (Increases the amount of unpaid parental or family leave available to an employee, from thirteen (13) weeks to twenty-six (26) weeks, in any two (2) calendar years.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7717.pdf>

House Bill No. [7718](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7718.pdf) Williams, Giraldo, Morales, Batista, Vella-Wilkinson**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS - WORKERS' COMPENSATION - OCCUPATIONAL DISEASES (Classifies as an occupational disease any disability or quarantine resulting from COVID-19 or other viral infection, classified by an executive order, during a declared state of emergency, subject to certain requirements.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7718.pdf>

House Bill No. [7721](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7721.pdf) Giraldo, Williams, Alzate, Lima, Morales, Batista, Cassar, Speakman, Kislak, Cortvriend**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- PAYMENT OF WAGES - EMPLOYEE RECORDS (Requires employer to furnish items and conditions of employment and a pay stub explaining how wages were calculated/reasons for deductions/allows the employee to file a court action against employer for violation.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7721.pdf>

House Bill No. [7781](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7781.pdf) (Dept. of Business Regulation) Solomon**,**AN ACT RELATING TO FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS -- CREATION AND EXPANSION (Amends a number of provisions in the general laws relative to financial institutions by eliminating unnecessary requirements and/or clarifying language in order to reduce certain burdens on businesses operating in Rhode Island.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7781.pdf>

House Bill No. [7794](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7794.pdf) Giraldo, Williams, Morales, Alzate, Felix, Barros, Biah**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- TEMPORARY DISABILITY INSURANCE -- CONTRIBUTIONS (Decreases an employee’s obligation for contribution from wages and requires an employer to contribute one-half of the amount to an employee’s contribution.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7794.pdf>

House Bill No. [7863](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7863.pdf) (Dept. of Labor and Training) McEntee, Caldwell, Morales

**ENTITLED,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- EMPLOYMENT SECURITY--GENERAL PROVISIONS (Extends until June 30, 2023, an increase in the total amount of earnings a partial-unemployment insurance claimant can receive before being entirely disqualified for unemployment insurance benefits.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7863.pdf>

House Bill No. [7883](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7883.pdf) Ruggiero, Craven, Hull, Williams, Morales, Ajello, Carson, Cortvriend, Slater, Baginski**,**AN ACT RELATING TO CRIMINAL OFFENSES -- IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION ACT OF 2015 (Creates a cybersecurity incident response group and implement stricter notice requirements to the effected parties.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7883.pdf>

House Bill No. [7901](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7901.pdf) Edwards**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS - PAYMENT OF WAGES (Eliminates repealed statute references and create a mechanism for employees to enforce their existing right to continuation of medical benefits.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7901.pdf>

House Bill No. [7904](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7904.pdf) Tanzi, Shanley, Craven, Ajello, Felix, McGaw, Batista, Ranglin-Vassell, Donovan, Kislak**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- FAIR EMPLOYMENTS PRACTICES (Amends the definition of employees to include individuals under appointment/contract/apprenticeship/volunteer or unpaid intern covered by fair employment practices.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7904.pdf>

House Bill No. [7905](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7905.pdf) Tanzi, Shanley, Craven, Ajello, Felix, McGaw, Batista, Donovan, Ranglin-Vassell, Kislak**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES (Forbids an employer to require an employee to execute a nondisclosure agreement or non-disparagement agreement, regarding alleged violations of civil rights or criminal conduct, as a condition of employment.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/HouseText22/H7905.pdf>

Senate Bill No. [2448](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2448.pdf) DiMario, Euer, Seveney, Anderson, Lawson, Cano, Zurier, Burke, Miller, DiPalma**,**AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- ELECTRIC TRANSPORTATION ACT (Provides for a plan and structure to transition to green energy in motor and other vehicles.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2448.pdf>

Senate Bill No. [2463](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2463.pdf) Algiere, DiPalma, de la Cruz, Rogers, Paolino, Lombardi**,**AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- ESTATE AND TRANSFER TAXES--LIABILITY AND COMPUTATION (Increases the net taxable estate exemption to three million six hundred thousand dollars ($3,600,000) on January 1, 2023 and increases the exemption by one million dollars ($1,000,000) on January 1 per year thereafter.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2463.pdf>

Senate Bill No. [2486](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2486.pdf) Ciccone, Lombardo, Lombardi**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- DIGNITY AT WORK ACT (Establishes the Dignity at Work Act, to provide workers with more protection from bullying and harassment in the workplace.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2486.pdf>

Senate Bill No. [2488](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2488.pdf) Acosta, Bell, Kallman, Anderson, Cano, Quezada**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- PAYMENT OF WAGES - EMPLOYEE RECORDS (Requires employer to furnish items and conditions of employment and a pay stub explaining how wages were calculated/reasons for deductions/allows the employee to file a court action against employer for violation.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2488.pdf>

Senate Bill No. [2551](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2551.pdf) Kallman, McCaffrey, Gallo, DiMario, Ruggerio, Miller, Lawson, Valverde, Seveney, Lombardo**,**AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT – REBUILD RHODE ISLAND TAX CREDIT (Requires that all entities receiving tax credits from the state pay their workers the prevailing wage or other payments pursuant to § 37-13. This act would also allow the revocation of the tax credits for violation of this act.)

<http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2551.pdf>