**This Week At the State House**

**Municipal Ordinance Moratorium For Restaurants and Bars**

On Monday, the House Small Business Committee considered H.6119 SubA. This amended bill imposes a moratorium on the enforcement of any municipal ordinance or zoning requirement that would penalize owners of food service establishments and bars for any modifications or alternations to their premises in response to an emergency declaration by the Governor or local municipal officials. The moratorium would be effective during the period of emergency and for six months after the emergency declaration is rescinded or until January 1, 2022, whichever occurs first.

**Minimum Wage Increase Takes Another Step**

On Tuesday at 3:00 p.m., the House Labor Committee is expected to recommend passage of S.1, the senate version of the minimum wage increase legislation. The Senate Labor Committee is set to pass the House version (H.5130) Wednesday at 5:00 p.m. With both committees scheduled to vote this week, the bills will likely get to the Governor’s desk next week.

**Incentives to Return to Work**

The House Finance Committee is scheduled to vote on an amended version of H.6249, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations. For weeks starting May 23, 2021, and continuing through June 30, 2022, an employee would be deemed “partially unemployed” in any week of less than full-time work if they fail to earn wages for that week in an amount equal to or greater than 150% of the weekly benefit rate for total unemployment to which they would be entitled if totally unemployed and eligible. This is meant to serve as an incentive for employees to return to work. Additionally, the Department of Labor and Training has signaled that it will reinstate the requirement to look for work in order to be eligible for unemployment compensation. The reinstatement is expected to begin later this month.

**Last Week At the State House**

**Revenue Estimating Conference – Caseload Estimates**

The Revenue Estimating Conference completed its 2021 and 2022 caseload estimates last week. An interesting takeaway, for all Rhode Islanders, is to understand is just how much the State has in fixed expenses based on current programs.

Rhode Island Works is expected to have 6000 individuals in the program in FY2021 at a monthly cost per person of $182.93, for a total cash payment of $13,170,960. Monthly bus passes are estimated at $566,400. Supportive services are set at $585,300. Clothing allowance for children is $351,158, and catastrophic payments of $300 is expected. The total cost for RI Works in FY2021 is $14,684,118. In FY2022, the conferees expect the number of individuals to uptick to 6,565 individuals at a monthly cost per person of $182.93 for a total cash payment of $14,411,225. Monthly bus passes are estimated to be $939,482; supportive services at $585,300; clothing allowance for children is $350,00 and catastrophic safety net is $4000. The total FY2022 estimate for RI Works is $16,290,007.

In the area of child care, FY2021 subsidies are expected to be given to 5725 recipients at an annual cost per subsidy of $9822, for a total of $56,574,450. A large portion of this expense comes from federal dollars. In FY2022 the conferees believe there will be approximately 7400 recipients at an annual cost per subsidy of $9091, for a total of $67,273,400.

In FY2021 there will be an estimated 33,237 people receiving SSI payments at a monthly cost per person of $46.18 for a total of $18,418,616. In FY2022, the conferees believe the number may go up slightly to 33,400 individuals. The monthly cost per person is $46.18 for a total of $18,508,944.

In the area of medical care, which includes: hospitals, long term care, managed care, acute care services, and pharmacy benefits, the numbers are very large. In FY2021 the total medical assistance program is estimated to be $2,690,300,000. In FY2022, the conferees believe the total will be $2,886,900,000. To give you an idea of how they arrived at such a large number, FY2022 is expected to cost:

* Hospitals - $197.1 million
* Nursing and Hospice Care - $351 million
* Home and Community Care - $91 million
* Managed Care - $852.2 million
* Rhody Health Partners - $296 million
* Rhody Health Options - $141.6 million
* Other Medical Services - $143.4 million
* Medicaid Expansion - $745.4 million\
* Pharmacy $69.2 million

In next week’s Under The Dome, we will review the revenue estimates predictions adopted by the Revenue Estimating Conference.

The following new bills have been filed:

House Bill No. [6297](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/HouseText21/H6297.pdf)  Casey, Craven, Kennedy, Amore, Messier, Chippendale, Barros, McEntee, Kazarian, Fogarty**,**AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT – TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT (Removes the requirement that five percent (5%) of the hotel tax be paid to the Greater Providence-Warwick Convention and Visitors Bureau and redistribute the five percent (5%) tax to the city or district where the hotel or residential unit is located.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/HouseText21/H6297.pdf>

House Bill No. [6302](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/HouseText21/H6302.pdf)  Place, Quattrocchi, Newberry**,**AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY (Prohibits public agencies and private businesses from requiring proof of COVID-19 vaccine before permitting any individual from entering the building or business.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/HouseText21/H6302.pdf>

House Bill No. [6310](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/HouseText21/H6310.pdf) Cortvriend, Fogarty, Batista, Morales, Alzate, Felix, Caldwell, Bennett, Kislak, Handy**,**AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY – TRANSPORTATION EMISSIONS AND MOBILE (TEAM) COMMUNITY ACT (Establishes the Transportation Emission and Mobile (Team) Community Act intended to limit and reduce indirect carbon dioxide emissions throughout the state while promoting the purposes of the transportation climate initiative program.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/HouseText21/H6310.pdf>

Senate Bill No. [872](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/SenateText21/S0872.pdf) DiMario, McCaffrey, Goodwin, Euer, Quezada, Miller, Valverde, Goldin**,**AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY – TRANSPORTATION EMISSIONS AND MOBILE (TEAM) COMMUNITY ACT (Establishes the Transportation Emission and Mobile (Team) Community Act intended to limit and reduce indirect carbon dioxide emissions throughout the state while promoting the purposes of the transportation climate initiative program.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/SenateText21/S0872.pdf>

Senate Bill No. [874](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/SenateText21/S0874.pdf) Quezada, Euer, Seveney, Sosnowski, Pearson, McCaffrey, Miller, Valverde, Goldin**,**AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC PROPERTY AND WORKS - CORROSION PREVENTION AND MITIGATION WORK REQUIREMENTS (Requires all contractors and subcontractors who perform construction, alteration, demolition, installation, repair or maintenance work, pursuant to public works contracts, to comply with industry standards for infrastructure corrosion prevention.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/SenateText21/S0874.pdf>

Senate Bill No. [877](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/SenateText21/S0877.pdf) DiMario, Valverde, Sosnowski, Acosta, Lawson, Mendes, Anderson, Kallman**,**AN ACT RELATING TO INSURANCE (Prohibits insurance carriers from charging out-of-pocket expenses to the insured for expenses related to the COVID-19 pandemic and mandates that all COVID-19 testing or vaccination is free.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/SenateText21/S0877.pdf>

Senate Bill No. [883](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/SenateText21/S0883.pdf) Lawson, Quezada, Cano, DiMario, Valverde, Seveney, Euer**,**AN ACT RELATING TO COMMERCIAL LAW -- GENERAL REGULATORY PROVISIONS (Requires all persons or entities collecting social security and other personal identification numbers to create and publicly display a privacy protection policy. Violations of this requirement would incur a civil penalty of five-hundred dollars ($500).) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText21/SenateText21/S0883.pdf>