**Budget Watch**

As of Monday morning, the House Finance Committee had not yet posted the budget for consideration. The House may post it for consideration this week, with the hopes of completing the legislative session sometime between June 17th and June 24th. Once the budget is passed by the Committee, it must set on the desk seven days before the full House can vote on the bill. The Senate does not have the same rule.

**Last Week at the State House**

The Senate Committee on Housing and Municipal Government voted 6-1 (Senator Rogers opposed) to recommend passage of S.2345, An Act Relating to Motor and Other Vehicles – Parking Facilities and Privileges. S.2345 is scheduled for a full Senate vote Tuesday afternoon. The bill requires all large parking lots (with a few exceptions) to include designated spots designed for persons transporting young children, under the age of three, and baby strollers. Lots with 101-500 spots must designate two spots; lots with 501-1000 spots must designate three spots; and lots with more than 100 spots must add one additional spot for each 500 parking spaces over 1000. Exemptions to this rule include single-family homes, duplexes, multifamily residences and industrial zoned properties. The bill contains specifications for the dimensions of the spots as well as the location. Property owners have two years from the date of enactment to comply. The bill can be viewed at: <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2345.pdf>

**This Week at the State House**

**Tuesday, June 7th**

Health care mandates are passing quickly. The House Health and Human Services Committee is scheduled to vote on a few bills Tuesday including H.7454, An Act Relating to Insurance – Accident and Sickness Insurance Policies. H.7454 allows pregnant women to enroll in health insurance any time after the commencement of the pregnancy. Coverage becomes effective the first month in which the woman submits the application. It applies to both large and small employer plans as well as the exchange.

The Senate Finance Committee is meeting at the Rise, approximately 4:30 in the Senate Lounge, to take testimony on S.2592, An Act Relating to State Affairs and Government – RI Hard Hit Liquidity Program Act. The bill creates a $20 million RI HELP fund to provide assistance corporations, partnerships and sole proprietors that have received less than $500,000 thus far in federal assistance. Eligible businesses must have less than $5 million in annual sales and have experienced at least a 50% drop in sales in at least three months (November, 2020 to June, 2021) as compared to November 2018 to June, 2019. The bill can be viewed at: <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2592.pdf>

Green building requirements are scheduled for a vote in the Senate Committee on Housing & Municipal Government at the Rise in room 310. S.2700, An Act Relating to Public Property and Works – The Green Buildings Act, expands the definition of public buildings under the Act to include private major facility projects. The bill also mandates public reporting on such projects. A “major facility project” is defined as “A building construction project larger than ten thousand (10,000) gross square feet of occupied or conditioned space; or (ii) A building renovation project larger than fifteen thousand (15,000) gross square feet of occupied or conditioned space.” Major Projects, if this bill passes into law, would be required to comply with LEED building requirements. Anyone wishing to submit testimony can attend in person or email written testimony to: SLegislation@rilegislature.gov The bill can be viewed at: <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2700.pdf>

**Wednesday, June 8th**

The House Environment & Energy Committee is expected to pass both the House and Senate versions of the plastic bag ban bills. H.7065 and S.2446 ban retailers from supplying customers with single-use plastic bags or paper bags not made of recyclable material. Penalties include a $100 fine for the first violation in a calendar year, $200 for the second offense in a calendar year, and $500 for the third violation or subsequent violations in a calendar year. The bill does contain a uniformity clause, which was requested by the business community, to avoid the confusion that follows municipal adoption of additional rules.

The following new bill was filled last week:

Senate Bill No. [2994](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2994.pdf) Pearson**,**AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT (Establishes the Health Spending Accountability and Transparency Act and the Rhode Island All-Payer Health Care Payment Reform Act.) <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText22/SenateText22/S2994.pdf>