**At the State House**

There are a few committee hearings of note scheduled for this week, however the state house remains closed to the public. Both the House and Senate Committees are accepting written testimony from the public. In addition, the House has created a process should a person feel it is necessary to testify verbally/remotely. The instructions can be found below.

**Tuesday, July 7th**

**The Senate Finance Committee** will meet at **4:00 p.m**. to accept testimony from the Governor’s staff concerning Article 8 section 2 and section 6 (Hotel tax), Article 8 section 3 (US Treasury Offset Program), Article 11 (Economic Development) and Article 12 (Housing). Last week’s edition of Under the Dome reviewed these articles. ***Article 8 section 6 was added to the agenda this week***. This is the section that calls for a 1% increase in the hotel tax. The public may submit written testimony only by emailing it to SLegislation@rilegislature.gov .

**House Judiciary** will meet at **4:30 p.m.** and **H.7947**, An Act Relating to Labor and Labor Relations – Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action – Licensing, is on the agenda. The bill declares it unlawful to disqualify a person for an occupational license, permit or certification due to a prior criminal conviction, unless the crime is directly related to the occupation for which the license/permit/certification applies. A license cannot be suspended for an unrelated crime as well. Finally the bill establishes a process for considering the licensing of the individual even if the crime was directly related, such as passage of time since the crime, juvenile status, etc. <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText20/HouseText20/H7947.pdf> Anyone wishing to testify by writing can submit comments to rdimezza@rilegislature.gov or for those who would prefer the option to provide verbal testimony please send an email to rdimezza@rilegislature.gov with the following information: Bill # you are testifying on For/Against, Your Name and Phone number (to be reached for your testimony), Affiliation: (if any) The Deadline to request verbal testimony is ***Tuesday, July 7, 2020 at 11am.***

**Wednesday July 8th**

Both the **House and Senate Labor Committees** will be hearing testimony on the **firefighter cancer bills**. H.7449, An Act Relating to Towns and Cities – Cancer Benefits for Firefighters will be heard in an amended form – H.7449 SubA. The SubA states that firefighters diagnosed with cancer have a “conclusive presumption” that the cancer is an occupational related cancer if they were hired prior to the date H.7449 SubA passes. Firefighters hired after the date of passage will also have a conclusive presumption UNLESS (1) that firefighter received a physical at the time of hiring and cancer was detected, (2) the firefighter is on the job for two years or less at the time of diagnosis, or (3) the firefighter “regularly or habitually used tobacco products during the 5 years prior to diagnosis.” The bill is both retroactive and prospective. Anyone wishing to testify in House Labor may submit comments to jdecastro@rilegislature.gov . For those who would prefer the option to provide verbal testimony please send an email to jdecastro@rilegislature.gov with the following information: Bill # you are testifying on For/Against, Your Name and Phone number (to be reached for your testimony), Affiliation: (if any) ***Deadline to request verbal testimony is Wednesday, July 8, 2020 by 11:00 AM.***

The Senate bill will be heard by the **Senate Labor Committee at 4:00 p.m. (S.2302 SubA,** An Act Relating to Towns and Cities – Cancer Benefits for Firefighters). Members of the public wishing to testify may submit written testimony to: SLegislation@rilegislature.gov

**Thursday, July 9th**

**The Senate Finance Committee** will hold a hearing on **Article 19 (Workforce Development)** of the Governor’s proposed budget. The Committee will also receive a report on the financial status of the **Unemployment Trust Fund** and “**potential employer tax schedule changes.**” Members of the public wishing to testify may submit written testimony to: SLegislation@rilegislature.gov

Article 19 is a 52 page Article that focuses on the construction industry and a few other areas of policy was outlined in last week’s edition of Under the Dome. If you are a member of the construction industry, the Chamber strongly urges you to read the Article which can be found at <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText20/HouseText20/Article-019.pdf>

The **House Finance Committee will meet at 4:00 p.m.** to take testimony on **Article 10 section 7** – the Governor’s **RI Promise** expansion proposal. The scholarship program, for high school students entering CCRI to obtain an Associate’s Degree, is set to sunset at the end of this year. The Governor’s proposal would remove the sunset, making the program permanent; and it extends the scholarship to individuals completing a “certificate program with labor market value as defined by the Postsecondary Commissioner.”

The Committee will also take testimony on a **new budget request** from Governor Raimondo submitted to the committee on July 2nd. The request is for the passage of a joint resolution authorizing the State Properties Committee to enter into a 10 year lease agreement for a property on Main Street in Woonsocket for a **northern RI and Woonsocket Education & Industry Center**. The rent in year 1 could be no more than $180,600 and no more than $247,000 by year 10.

Anyone wishing to testify on either issue should submit written testimony to cobrien@rilegislature.gov . For those who would prefer the option to provide verbal testimony please send an email to cobrien@rilegislature.gov with the following information: Bill # (or specific topic) you are testifying on For/Against Your Name and Phone number (to be reached for your testimony) Affiliation: (if any) ***Deadline to request verbal testimony is Thursday, July 9, 2020 at 11am.***

New bills filed last week:

House Bill No. [8085](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText20/HouseText20/H8085.pdf) Williams**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- WORKERS' COMPENSATION (This is the annual workers' compensation omnibus bill. It would slightly alter the process and type of benefits for which work-related injured employees of uninsured employers may seek compensation.)

Senate Bill No. [2915](http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText20/SenateText20/S2915.pdf) Ciccone**,**AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- WORKERS' COMPENSATION (This is the annual workers' compensation omnibus bill. It would slightly alter the process and type of benefits for which work-related injured employees of uninsured employers may seek compensation.)