

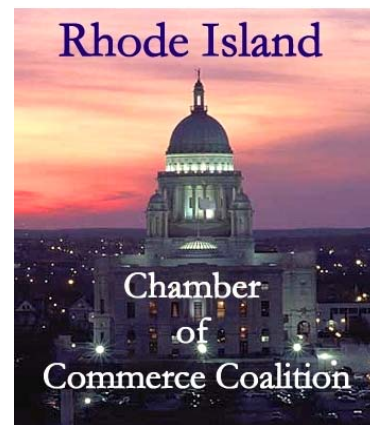
# UNDER THE DOME

News from the Rhode Island State House

**“Your source for Government Affairs information”**

*A publication of the Central Rhode Island, Cranston, East Bay, East Greenwich, East Providence Area, Newport County, North Central, Northern Rhode Island, North Kingstown, South Kingstown & Greater Westerly-Pawcatuck Chambers of Commerce*

*Serving a combined 12,000 member businesses*



*April 7, 2009*

---

## **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009**

To see information on all Rhode Island activities related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, **Go To:** [recovery.ri.gov](http://recovery.ri.gov)

Learn about:

- All projects and programs
- Grant opportunities
- Assistance offered
- Expenditures
- Project status
- Accounting for every dollar
- How Rhode Island benefits

### *Legislation of interest and Chamber Coalition positions:*

<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText09/SenateText09/S0114.pdf>

This bill would repeal the current capital gains tax rate and revert back to the rate prior to 2006.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText09/SenateText09/S0115.pdf>

This bill would repeal the alternative flat tax rate.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

Senate Bill 290

**Introduced by Senators** Blais, Cote, Maselli, Walaska

AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT - SMALL BUSINESS  
REGULATORY FAIRNESS IN ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

This bill would create the small business regulatory fairness in administrative procedures chapter designed to reduce the burden of unfair regulations on small business.

**The Chamber Coalition supports this legislation**

<http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText09/HouseText09/H5282.pdf>

This bill would set an alternative minimum tax rate and set that rate at 7%.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

Senate Bill 259

**Introduced by Senator** Cote

AN ACT RELATING TO COURTS AND CIVIL PROCEDURE - PROCEDURE IN PARTICULAR  
ACTIONS - JOINT AND SEVERAL LIABILITY

This bill would limit liability of a tortfeasor to only several damages if it is found that the defendant is no more than twenty five percent liable.

**The Chamber Coalition supports this legislation.**

Senate Bill 156

**Introduced by Senators** Metts, Pichardo, Levesque C, Crowley, Goodwin

AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- FAIR EMPLOYMENT  
PRACTICES

This bill would prohibit an employer from refusing to hire a person based solely on the existence of a criminal record --with some exceptions. It would further prohibit a governmental agency from denying an individual a license to work in a particular trade or business based solely on that individual having a criminal record; again with some exceptions.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

Senate Bill 241

**Introduced by Senators** Sosnowski, Perry, Miller, Blais, Crowley

AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION - OPTIONAL LOCAL SALES AND USE TAX ON SUGAR  
SWEETENED BEVERAGES

This bill would authorize cities and towns to impose an additional local sales tax on sugar sweetened beverages not to exceed twenty percent.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

Senate Bill 257

**Introduced by Senator** McCaffrey

AN ACT RELATING TO COURTS AND CIVIL PROCEDURE - PROCEDURE GENERALLY -  
INSURANCE

This bill would provide that when a person commences an action for injuries to the person in a timely manner, and service against the insured tortfeasor is returned marked "non est inventus" and filed with the court within six months.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

Senate Bill 676

**Introduced by Senators** Maselli, Jabour, Walaska, DaPonte, Bates

AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC PROPERTY AND WORKS -- STATE PURCHASES

This bill would require the state purchasing agent to award twenty-five percent of state contracts to Rhode Island small businesses.

**The Chamber Coalition supports this legislation.**

Senate Bill 331

**Introduced by Senator** Goodwin

AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS

This bill would amend the labor relations act to provide for a certified representative for collective bargaining.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

House Bill 5381

**Introduced by Representatives** Gablinske, Trillo, Palumbo, Newberry, Brien

AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS - EMPLOYEE VOTING

This bill would require that all employees voting on issues concerning the exercise of their labor relations rights do so by the use of secret ballots.

**The Chamber Coalition supports this legislation.**

Senate Bill 588

**Introduced by Senator** McCaffrey

AN ACT RELATING TO COMMERCIAL LAW - GENERAL REGULATORY PROVISIONS - DECEPTIVE TRADE PRACTICES

This bill would repeal an exemption to the deceptive trade practices law that had exempted transactions permitted by the state or funded regulatory agency or offer.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

Senate Bill 653

**Introduced by Senators** Ruggerio, McBurney, Goodwin, Pichardo, Metts

AN ACT RELATING TO HISTORIC STRUCTURES

This bill would make amounts expended for qualified rehabilitation expenditures over \$1,000 subject to the prevailing wage and payments on behalf of an employer.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

House Bill 5505

**Introduced by Representatives** Williamson, Gablinske, Trillo, Brien, Corvese

AN ACT RELATING TO EDUCATION -- COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

This bill would eliminate the collective bargaining references and requirements throughout title 16 of state law.

**The Chamber Coalition supports this legislation.**

Senate Bill 675

**Introduced by Senators** Perry, Miller, Blais, Maher

AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION - SOFT DRINK AND SYRUP TAX

This bill would impose a tax on soft drinks and syrups and require all distributors, manufacturers or sellers of soft drinks and syrups to obtain a license in order to conduct such business.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

House Bill 5161

**Introduced by Representatives** Guthrie, Fierro

AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC PROPERTY AND WORKS -- STATE PURCHASES

This bill would require that Rhode Island businesses and products be utilized and given state contracts when they can provide substantially equal goods and services as an out of state business. It would further provide those businesses with a three percent differential where a bid would be required, and would require the RIEDC to maintain a list of these businesses and products.

The Chamber Coalition supports this legislation.

Senate Bill 747

**Introduced by Senators** Pichardo, Metts, Miller, Jabour, Levesque C

AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- PERSONAL INCOME TAX

This bill would increase the maximum capital gains rate for tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2009.

The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.

House Bill 5135

**Introduced by Representatives** Walsh, Ajello, Almeida, Williams, Handy

AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT - THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1990

This bill would set a three year statute of limitations on any alleged violation of this chapter. (The consequence of passage will be an overturning of Horn v. Southern Union.)

The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.

House Bill 5144

**Introduced by Representatives** Winfield, Fierro, Flaherty

AN ACT RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES - THE AWARDED OF MUNICIPAL CONTRACTS

This bill would give priority to Rhode Island located businesses whose bids on municipal contracts are up to 3% higher than the lowest bid.

The Chamber Coalition supports this legislation.

House Bill 5285

**Introduced by Representatives** Segal, Fierro, Silva

AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION - PERSONAL INCOME TAX

This bill would require employers to provide employees with bi-lingual notices regarding the existence of the federal earned income tax credit & volunteer income tax assistance providers.

The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.

House Bill 5354

**Introduced by Representatives** Guthrie, Fierro

AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC PROPERTY AND WORKS - STATE PURCHASES

This bill would add a percent increase to the bid of a non-resident bidder equal to the percent preference given to the non-resident bidder in the state where in the bidder resides.

The Chamber Coalition supports this legislation.

House Bill 5504 (See Senate bill 331)

**Introduced by Representative** Almeida

AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS

This bill would amend the labor relations act to provide for a certified representative for collective bargaining.

The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.

House Bill 5624

**Introduced by Representatives** DaSilva, McCauley, Carnevale, Driver

AN ACT RELATING TO TAXATION -- PERSONAL INCOME TAX

This bill would freeze the alternative flat tax rate at seven percent for tax years 2009 and 2010.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

House Bill 5629

**Introduced by Representatives** Ucci, Fellela, Marcello, Guthrie, Fierro

AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC PROPERTY OF WORKS - STATE PURCHASES

This bill would give Rhode Island companies a preference in bidding on state contracts if the company is within ten percent of the lowest bid.

**The Chamber Coalition supports this legislation.**

House Bill 5699

**Introduced by Representatives** Fox, Rice A, Ferri, Slater, Naughton

AN ACT RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT

This bill would create the health insurance hub, an entity separate and distinct from the state, but which would operate as a government agency, whose members would serve without pay, to monitor and make available to individuals, private health insurance choices.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

House Bill 5939

**Introduced by Representatives** Segal, Ferri, DaSilva

AN ACT RELATING TO LABOR AND LABOR RELATIONS -- MINIMUM WAGES

This bill would require that janitors paid by the state working in state owned and leased buildings shall be paid in accordance with the existing prevailing wage.

**The Chamber Coalition opposes this legislation.**

**Remember: The Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce Coalition is *your* voice at the Rhode Island State House. If you have any concerns, questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us.**

**Thank you for your continued interest.**

---

**Edited by**

David R. Carlin III

**Coordinator - RI Chamber of Commerce Coalition**

Government Affairs Committee

[dcarlin@nichamber.com](mailto:dcarlin@nichamber.com)

401-334-1000 x 107