

## 2018 Legislative Session in Review

The 2018 legislative session has come to an end. The Chamber actively monitored 233 bills this year. Of those, the chamber supported the passage of 51 bills; opposed 168 bills; and actively monitored 14 bills to ensure they were not amended during the session. Thank you for your continued interest in Under the Dome. Mark your calendars – Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup> is Primary Day! (the primary will be held on a Wednesday due to a religious holiday)

### Bills Supported:

Of the 51 bills supported by the Chamber, 10 passed into law.

**H.7290 SubA** – Pawsox establishes the framework to allow the City of Pawtucket and the State of Rhode Island to enter into an agreement to build a new Pawtucket Redsox stadium. The team leadership is reviewing the proposal to determine if they wish to move forward.

**H.7080 SubA and S.2145 SubA.** On July 1, 2019, city and town clerks or recorders of deeds will have the option to accept electronic documents for recording real property land records. This will save both municipalities and the parties to a real estate transaction time and money.

**H.7251 SubA and S.2763 SubA.** These bills allow an individual who is applying for a commercial driver's license (CDL), or renewing a CDL, to submit the medical examiner's certificate to the Department of Motor Vehicles by electronic transmission. The new law requires the DMV to add a menu item to its website to allow for the electronic submission of the required medical document.

**S.2934 SubA.** This new law establishes a reinsurance program that provides reinsurance to health insurance carriers offering coverage on the individual market. The intent of the reinsurance program is to mitigate the impact of high-risk, high-cost individuals on the cost of health insurance premiums in the state by covering the costs of those individuals beyond a specific threshold. The program is to be funded through federal dollars. Without federal funding the program will not be implemented.

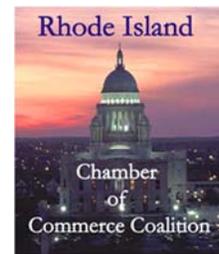
**H.7104.** H. 7140 helps to address the problems caused by road and bridge construction by requiring DOT to identify the impact of such projects on small businesses and to share that information with Commerce with at least two months' notice. Commerce is then required to

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Central Rhode Island, East Bay, East Greenwich, East Providence Area, Narragansett, Newport County, Northern Rhode Island, North Kingstown, Ocean Community, & Southern Rhode Island

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assist businesses affected by road and bridge construction by sharing information with the small businesses in the affected communities, informing them of the resources and programs available to them to minimize the economic and financial impact of the construction, and meeting with affected businesses as necessary.

**H.7121.** This new law requires the director of administration and the commissioner of health insurance to seek a waiver under Section 1332 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act for the purpose of allowing self-employed and sole proprietors to purchase insurance in the small group market. This is an enabling legislation which would allow business owners to decide the best financial route to providing healthcare for their employees.

**H.7385 SubA.** The passage of this law extends the sunset requiring mediation conferences prior to mortgage foreclosures to 2023. The current law was scheduled to sunset July 1, 2018. The law also reduces the fees paid by mortgage holders to RI Housing from \$500 per “engagement” to \$100 per “mediation engagement.” RI Housing was collecting fees even if the mortgagor chose not to participate in any mediation activity.

**H.7807.** H.7807 requires the Office of Energy Resource to study the electric and natural gas efficiency programs to determine if the measures are achieving energy savings and to make recommendations for changes if appropriate.

### **Bills Monitored:**

Of the 14 bills monitored by the Chamber, 1 passed into law.

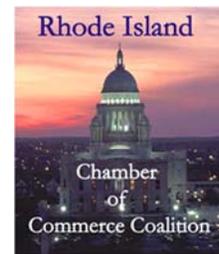
H.8122aa. <http://webserver.rilin.state.ri.us/BillText/BillText18/HouseText18/H8122.pdf> eliminates red tape requirements on various business entities such as, common carriers, mobile homes, manufacture wholesalers, barbers, hairdressers, manicurists, optometrists, physical therapists, occupational therapists, mental health counselors, marriage therapists and massage therapists.

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## **Bills Opposed.**

Of the 168 bills opposed by the Chamber, 8 passed into law. All but one of the bills that passed added mandates to the state's health insurance coverage plans.

**H.7625 SubA and S.2529 SubA.** The Contraceptive coverage bill was changed dramatically prior to passage. The bill now states that the Executive Office of Health and Human Services must apply for federal approval to provide 365 days of coverage from contraceptive from a single prescription written for a patient. Additionally, after April 1, 2019, if an insurance plan covers contraceptives, then it must cover 365 days for contraceptives.

**H.7002 SubA and S.2224 SubA.** These bills, now law, require health insurers to cover the entire cost of mastectomies as well as reconstruction following the procedure. The insurance must cover costs of treatments covered by physician assistants and advanced practice registered nurses (prior law covered only attending physicians). Co-pays can no longer be charged by insurers nor can the costs fall under the individual's deductible.

**H.7800 SubA and S.2597 SubA.** This "Payment of Wages" bill was amended prior to passage. The original language required employers to provide all documents and payments in paper form unless the employee opted out. The law now reads: "All statements and records required to be furnished to an employee by this section may be furnished as an electronic record. The employer shall furnish to an employee a printed or handwritten record, in lieu of an electronic record, at no cost to the employee, when a written authorization from such employee is provided to the employer."

**H.7806 SubA.** All health insurance plans renewed after January 1, 2019, must include behavioral health counseling visits and medication maintenance visits as primary care visits for patient cost-sharing requirements.

**H.7855.** This new law applies to all state and municipal construction contracts \$250,000 or more. These projects will now require a 5% retainage provision which can be utilized if the contractor and subcontractors dispute costs or quality of work. Massachusetts' retainage law goes into effect once the project reaches a cost of \$3 million.

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