
The

SMITH HILL REPORT



PUBLISHED BY THE RHODE ISLAND FEDERATION OF TEACHERS & HEALTH PROFESSIONALS/AFT, AFL-CIO

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Budget Introduced

Governor Gina Raimondo gave her State of the State Address on Tuesday, January 16, 2018. In her speech, she presented an upbeat view of progress in Rhode Island and outlined her budget priorities. On Thursday, January 18th, the Governor's budget proposal was introduced in the House of Representatives. [H7200](#) contains both appropriations for state agencies and programs as well as changes in state law related to the budget. These changes in state law are known as budget articles.

Over the next few weeks, RIFTHP staff will closely examine the budget to identify proposals that impact our members. Future issues of the Smith Hill Report will include budget highlights (as well as lowlights). The Governor's budget proposal is for FY 2019, the fiscal year that runs from July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019.

In the next few weeks, the House and Senate Finance Committees will begin public hearings on budget appropriations for each state department and agency. They will also hold hearings on each budget article.

For additional details on the Governor's budget proposal, visit the State of Rhode Island's Office of Management and Budget FY 2019 web page located at omb.ri.gov.

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The RIFTHP publishes regular editions of the Smith Hill Report during the legislative session. The newsletter is sent to local union leaders who then distribute it to their membership. If you would like to receive this newsletter directly from the RIFTHP, you may do so by signing up using the following link: [Sign-Up](#)

Bill Introductions

Partial Reimbursement – Dyslexia Education Certification

[\(H7107\)](#) *Hagan McEntee, House Finance*

This resolution would appropriate sufficient sums to pay one-half the costs of teachers to obtain an international dyslexia association (IDA) aligned graduate certificate in dyslexia knowledge and practice.

Charter School Board Membership – Sending Districts

[\(H7122\)](#) *Hagan McEntee, House Health, Education and Welfare*

This bill would authorize school committees to appoint one designee to the board of directors of the governing body of any public charter school where students who are residents of the school committee's district comprise at least five percent (5%) of the student body at the public charter school.

Tuition Equity

[\(H7137\)](#) *Diaz, House Finance*

This bill would create the "Student Equal Economic Opportunity Act" which would identify those students who are exempt from paying nonresident tuition at public universities, colleges or community colleges.

Student Discipline – Alternative Programs

[\(H7153\)](#) *Ranglin-Vassell, House Health, Education and Welfare*

This bill would require school districts to provide for alternative programs and classroom space, within the school, to reduce the number of out-of-school suspensions. Students that pose a threat to a peer, teacher, administrator, support staff or themselves would be placed in an alternative educational setting within the school with a RIDE certified teacher.

School Field Trip Requirement

[\(H7157\)](#) *Perez, House Health, Education and Welfare*

This bill would require that public schools of this state, beginning in kindergarten and continuing through and including grade twelve (12), would annually provide access for every student to at least one field trip to a nature preserve, reserve, or conservatory.

Schools - Sunscreen Application

[\(H7158\)](#) *Bennett, House Health, Education and Welfare*

This bill would allow students in public schools to possess and use sunscreen.

Teacher and Municipal Worker Contract Continuation

[\(H7198\)](#) *Vella-Wilkinson, House Labor*

The RIFTHP supports this bill which would require that the contractual provisions contained in an

otherwise expired collective bargaining agreement with certified school teachers and municipal employees would continue until a successor agreement has been reached between the parties.

Voter Initiative – Constitutional Amendment

([S2035](#) Cote, Senate Special Legislation)

The RIFTHP opposes this resolution which would approve, publish and submit to the electors a proposition of amendment to the Constitution of the State of Rhode Island (Initiative and Referendum).

Voter Initiative

([S2036](#) Cote, Senate Special Legislation)

The RIFTHP opposes this bill which provide a detailed process by which a proponent of a voter initiative and referendum proposal would present the proposal to the Secretary of State, the General Assembly and the Governor.

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