

VICTORIA GU

State Senate — District 38 —

May Newsletter: 6 Weeks Until the End of Session



Dear Friends and Neighbors,

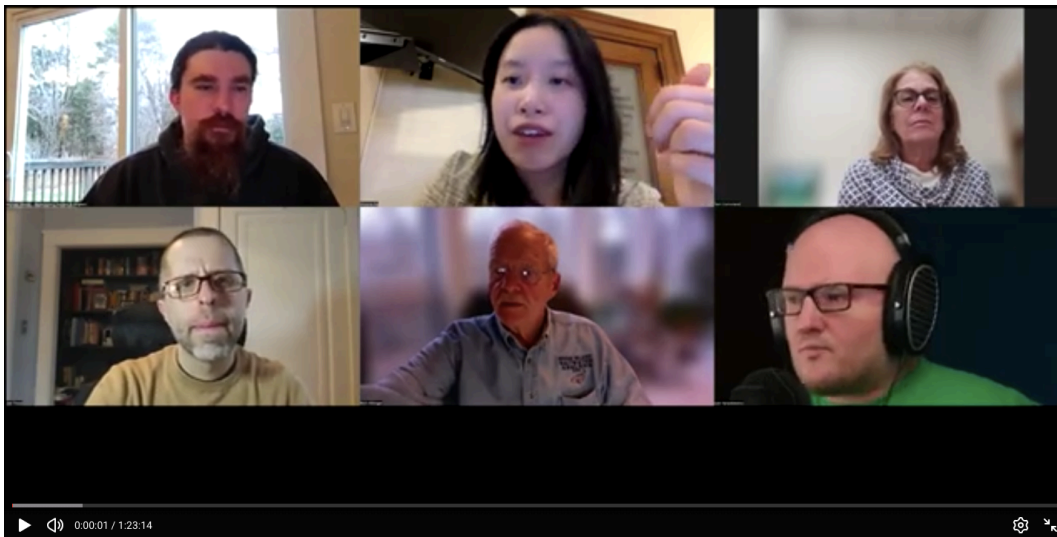
We've gotten through some long committee hearings in the last month. Hearings usually start at ~5pm and can go until 8, 9 or even past 10pm! Thanks to everyone who takes time out of their day to come to the State House and testify.

The Work Behind the Scenes

There's a lot that happens with a bill outside of its first hearing. The first time a bill is heard, the committee hears testimony, written and in-person, and the bill is always "Held for further study." Then the bill sponsor and committee chair look at the bill testimony and decide how to revise the bill. Sometimes it requires more meetings and/or negotiations between people/orgs/companies that support and those that oppose.

Homeowner insurance protection bill advancing

I'm happy to say that, after extensive negotiation, we're advancing my bill S-2011A to protect homeowners by requiring 60 days' advance notice if your insurance company is not renewing your insurance coverage. Insurance companies are being a lot more scrupulous about where they insure (I've had people who live a few miles from the water say that their entire neighborhood was dropped from an insurer) and the conditions of the house they insure (for example, declining to cover houses that have older roofs, older water heaters, or other conditions). The 60 days' advance notice will help homeowners find alternative insurance coverage and find tradespeople if they need to fix something at their house in order to continue insurance coverage.



Town Hall Recap: Shoreline Access & CRMC Reform

Thank you to everyone who joined our recent shoreline access town hall and to the many advocates, speakers, and organizations (Save the Bay, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, RI Saltwater Anglers Association) who made it such a meaningful conversation 🌊. We covered everything from shoreline access and managed retreat bills to CRMC reform and how to give effective, impactful testimony—because

personal stories truly make a difference in the legislative process. I'm especially grateful to all who shared their time, expertise, and commitment to protecting public access to our coast.

If you missed it, you can watch the full discussion here: https://youtu.be/UX_ZvcDwxKk

And if you care about protecting shoreline access in Rhode Island, I encourage you to take a moment to make your voice heard by submitting testimony here: <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/express-your-support-for-shoreline-access-bills-in-ri>

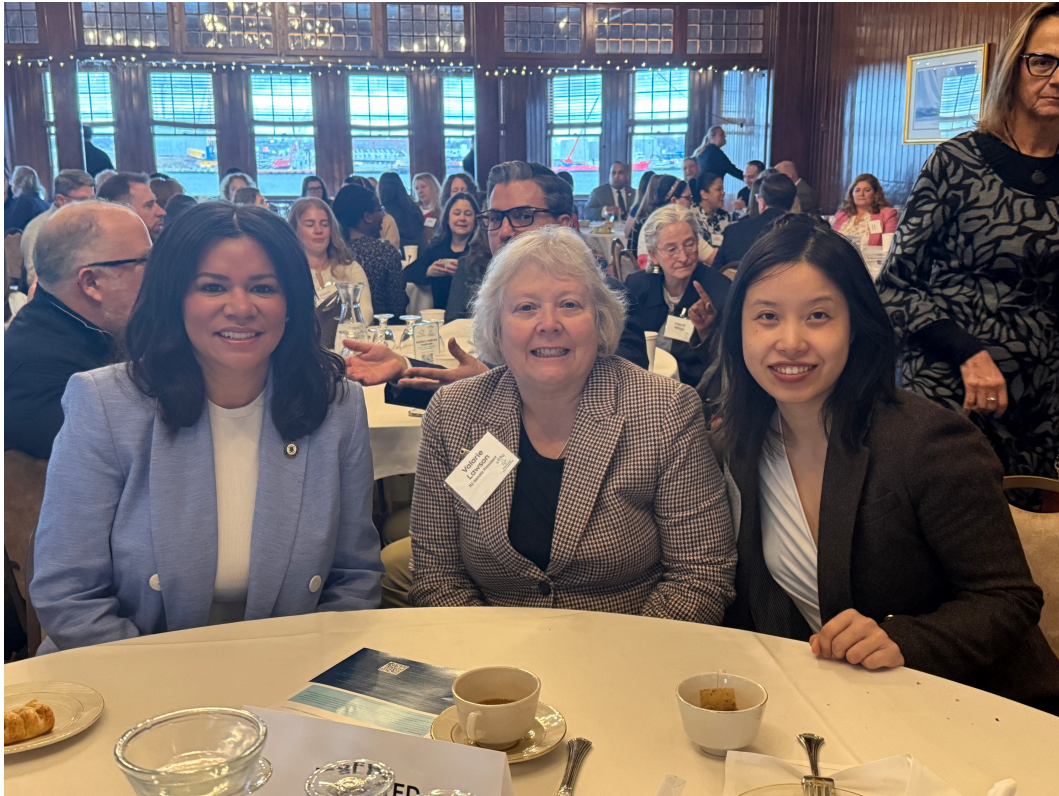
Submit testimony on shoreline access bills



SHORELINE ACCESS BILLS 2026

H-8110 / S-2734	Disclose shoreline access law and other public access conditions to renters of oceanfront property
H-7776 / S-2704	Option to preserve abandoned roads as walking, biking trails
H-8107 / S-2135	Allow historic footpaths to be designated as rights-of-way

Bill Spotlight: Food is Medicine, Advocacy Panel



As a volunteer with Meals on Wheels years ago, I got to know many homebound seniors. The research shows that mobility-impaired older adults, especially in rural areas, face a higher risk of malnutrition, which is strongly linked to falls, hospitalizations, and avoidable ER visits.

Nutrition doesn't just impact seniors; diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease are the top chronic diseases plaguing Americans, and they're largely influenced by diet and lifestyle and compounded by food insecurity and less access to fresh food for Medicaid recipients.

Other states—including **Massachusetts, California, and Oregon**—are already using Medicaid waivers and federal rural health funding to scale Food is Medicine programs, with early evidence of better outcomes and reduced costs.

Source: <https://shvs.org/how-states-are-using-the-rhtp-to-advance-food-is-medicine-interventions/>

I ran a campaign focused on **evidence-based policymaking**. I'm proposing S-2892 and H-8171 **to try a new pilot program and measure results**—we expect to show

how Food Is Medicine improves health outcomes and reduces system-wide healthcare costs before scaling statewide. With the 5-year long federal rural health grant that Rhode Island has received, this is the opportune time to do the pilot.

Upcoming Events

**May 12th @6pm at the Westerly Library and Wilcox Park
44 Broad St., Westerly**



The League of Women Voters South County in partnership with the Westerly Library and Wilcox Park presents a documentary short film and panel discussion



ABOUT THE FILM:

A behind the scenes look at the experiences of U.S. election officials in rural and urban jurisdictions of four battleground states as they work to hold free and fair elections during the contentious 2024 election.

A panel discussion will follow with:

- Miguel Nunez, Executive Director, Board of Elections
- Kathy Placencia, Director of Elections, Secretary of State Office
- Rosalie Harris, Chair, Westerly Board of Canvassers



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PHOTO ID BUS PASS

Need a RIPTA Photo ID Bus Pass?

RIPTA's Customer Service staff regularly travel to rural and urban communities throughout the state to provide reduced fare bus passes to **qualified seniors and individuals with disabilities**. Look out for us at these locations where we will be processing photo identification bus passes, accepting bus pass applications, and answering your transit questions.



May and June 2026 Community Site Visits

5/7	Westerly Senior Center 39 State Street 10am - 12pm
5/14	South Kingstown Senior Center 25 St. Domenic Road, Wakefield 10am - 12pm
5/21	Fox Point Manor 573 Wickenden Street, Providence 10am - 12pm
5/28	East Providence Senior Center 610 Waterman Avenue 10am - 12pm
6/4	Coventry Resource and Senior Center 50 Wood Street 10am - 12pm
6/11	Aging Well, Inc. 84 Social Street, Woonsocket 9am - 11am

Can't make it to one of our site visits?

Visit our Photo ID Office in Kennedy Plaza.
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Friday
8am - 4pm (closed 12pm - 1pm).

Or **apply online** at [RIPTA.com/ReducedFare](https://www.ripta.com/ReducedFare)



[RIPTA.com/ReducedFare](https://www.ripta.com/ReducedFare) | 401-784-9500 x2012

Next rail advocates meeting: May 11th 6pm @ Westerly Library

Past Events

**Working on
Managed Retreat**



Thanks to Gina Fuller, who did some of this environmental stewardship work in the Southern RI Conservation District, for coming up from Westerly to testify on my managed retreat bill. Rep Cortvriend and I attended a managed retreat workshop more than a year ago and put those best practices from other states into this bill. Read more in our op-ed: <https://www.providencejournal.com/story/opinion/columns/2026/04/18/rhode-islands-managed-retreat-plan-for-rising-seas-opinion/89628806007/>

RI Civic Leadership Breakfast

I had the opportunity to sit down with students from across the state and talk about civic engagement, public service, and what it means to get involved in our democracy.

I was especially glad to sit with Senator Mark McKenney and discuss the legislative process with a group of high school students who were preparing for a mock debate on the bottle bill later in the day. These conversations are exactly what programs like this are all about—giving young people the tools and confidence to make their voices heard.





Legislative Grant for Charlestown Rescue

Proud to have secured a legislative grant to support the work of Charlestown Ambulance-Rescue Service. They provide critical emergency medical services to Charlestown residents and visitors, including advanced life support, ambulance transportation, technical rescue operations, and community education—all powered by a dedicated team of volunteers. Grateful for everything they do for our community!

RIC AI Ethics Class

Great visiting Rhode Island College as a guest lecturer in the “Social and Ethical Issues in Technology” course. I shared my path into public service and we had a thoughtful conversation about the real-world impact of emerging tech—especially the work we’re doing in the Senate Artificial Intelligence & Emerging Technologies Committee. From AI in health insurance decisions to workplace surveillance and data privacy, these are complex issues that demand thoughtful policymaking—and voices from people who understand the technology. It was especially valuable hearing from students with work experience who are already seeing how electronic



surveillance tools are shaping their workplaces.



Legislative Grant for Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce

Glad to support the Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce with a legislative grant! Their initiatives like the Nutcracker Trail (each featuring a local business) and Sunday Fundays are just a few of the ways they contribute to a thriving downtown with many family-friendly events that support our local businesses.

Office of the Child Advocate

[Visit Website](#)

Who should use this resource: Those concerned about a judicial proceeding facing their child, those who want to know their rights as parents, and those who are concerned about a child's well-being. If you are worried about how a child is being treated by a program or state agency, contact the OCA.

- **Mission:** To protect the legal rights of children in State care and promote policies that ensure children's safety, stability, and that their needs are met.
- **Services:** The OCA provides a number of services to constituents.
 - Educational Advocates make education decisions for disabled children in DCYF care whose parents cannot advocate on their behalf.
 - Attorneys for the Parents ensures the statutory and constitutional rights of parents are protected in judicial proceedings.

- Rhode Island Legal Services works closely with the OCA to provide legal services for low-income individuals across the state
- The OCA's Social Case Workers (DCYF) help families obtain necessary resources, and Social Case Worker Supervisors (also within DCYF) ensure children are protected from harm.

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