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Roger A. Picard

Rhode Island

State Senator, SD-020 (D)

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Lifetime
Freedom
Score

RI Legislative Scorecard 2024

✓ Pro-Freedom ✗ Anti-Freedom – Did not Vote

Vote

1. Amends Rhode Island's Office of Health and Human Services laws to provide Emergency Medicaid coverage for dialysis treatment and kidney transplants for non-citizens who do not qualify for Medicaid.



Pro-Freedom: **No** · Cast: **Yes** · S2397 · 05/21/2024

2. Establishes the Rhode Island Drug Cost Review Commission to review and set price limits for prescription drugs when manufacturers increase or introduce prices above specified thresholds.



Pro-Freedom: **No** · Cast: **Yes** · S2719 · 05/21/2024

3. Establishes the Renewable Ready Program to promote renewable energy development on contaminated or state-owned sites by creating a fund within the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank.



Pro-Freedom: **No** · Cast: **Yes** · S2293 · 05/16/2024

4. Amends Rhode Island's weapons laws to mandate safe storage of firearms, requiring they be secured in locked containers or equipped with safety devices when not in use.



Pro-Freedom: **No** · Cast: **Yes** · S2202 · 06/06/2024

5. Allows the state Attorney General to investigate and bring an enforcement action against persistent fraud or illegality in the carrying on, conducting, or transaction of business or governmental activity.



Pro-Freedom: **No** · Cast: **Yes** · H7830 · 06/13/2024

6. Amends Rhode Island's mail ballot laws to require that mail ballot drop boxes be accessible to the public starting 35 days prior to state and federal elections, and 20 days prior to special elections.



Pro-Freedom: **No** · Cast: **Yes** · S2780 · 06/11/2024

Scorecard Votes: 0%

Why do these votes matter?

1. Taxpayer Funded Dialysis for Illegal Immigrants

S2397 amends Rhode Island's Office of Health and Human Services laws to provide Emergency Medicaid coverage for dialysis treatment and kidney transplants for non-citizens who do not qualify for Medicaid. The bill covers hemodialysis, peritoneal dialysis, and kidney transplants for non-citizens.

The Rhode Island Senate passed S2397 on May 21, 2024 by a vote of 36 to 1. We have assigned pluses to the nays because this legislation expands government spending, exceeding constitutional limits on state authority and burdening taxpayers. Taxpayer funds should not be used to provide healthcare, as "social welfare" is not the role of government. Illegal aliens should not be permitted sanctuary or residency in Rhode Island.

2. Drug Cost Review Commission

S2719 establishes the Rhode Island Drug Cost Review Commission to review and set price limits for prescription drugs when manufacturers increase or introduce prices above specified thresholds.

The Rhode Island Senate passed S2719 on May 21, 2024 by a vote of 28 to 8. We have assigned pluses to the nays because establishing "price controls" is not the role of government. Taxpayer funds should not support a commission that imposes price controls, distorts competition, and risks reducing access to innovative medications. The free market, not government intervention, should determine drug pricing to ensure efficiency and consumer choice without unconstitutional government overreach.

3. Renewable Energy Subsidy Program

S2293 establishes the Renewable Ready Program to promote renewable energy development on contaminated or state-owned sites by creating a fund within the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank.

The Rhode Island Senate passed S2293 on May 16, 2024 by a vote of 34 to 3. We have assigned pluses to the nays because this legislation expands government intervention in the energy sector, violating constitutional limits on state power and free-market principles. Taxpayer funds should not subsidize renewable energy projects that distort market competition. This legislation advances a UN 2030 Agenda-inspired "climate change" policy that infringes on property rights and economic liberties. Private enterprise should drive energy innovation without state mandates or government handouts that undermine individual freedom.

4. Firearm Storage Requirement

S2202 amends Rhode Island's weapons laws to mandate safe storage of firearms, requiring they be secured in locked containers or equipped with safety devices when not in use. The bill also requires licensed firearm dealers to provide trigger locks with all pistol, rifle, and shotgun sales and mandates informational signs and pamphlets about secure storage at sales sites and schools.

The Rhode Island Senate passed S2202 on June 6, 2024 by a vote of 30 to 7. We have assigned pluses to the nays because this legislation infringes on the Second Amendment and expands government intrusion into private property and personal freedoms. Taxpayer resources should not be used to enforce regulations that burden law-abiding citizens while failing to address criminal misuse of firearms. The right to keep and bear arms should remain free from state-imposed restrictions that erode individual liberty under the guise of public safety.

5. Expanding Attorney General's Authority

H7830 allows the state Attorney General to investigate and bring an enforcement action against persistent fraud or illegality in the carrying on, conducting, or transaction of business or governmental activity.

The Rhode Island Senate passed H7830 on June 13, 2024 by a vote of 30 to 7. We have assigned pluses to the nays because this legislation expands the power of the Attorney General, rather than limiting the position to its proper constitutional role. Taxpayer resources should not fund broad investigative authority that could be abused to target businesses or individuals unfairly. This legislation creates excessive government interference in the free market, imposing burdensome regulations and penalties that deters lawful commerce. Businesses and citizens should operate without the threat of overreaching state intervention under vague definitions of "persistent illegality."

6. Election Drop Boxes

S2780 amends Rhode Island's mail ballot laws to require that mail ballot drop boxes be accessible to the public starting 35 days prior to state and federal elections, and 20 days prior to special elections. Additionally, this legislation mandates that drop boxes be placed in every town or city, with locations determined by local boards of canvassers, and establishes procedures for the collection, storage, and transportation of ballots deposited in these boxes.

The Rhode Island Senate passed S2780 on June 11, 2024 by a vote of 32 to 5. We have assigned pluses to the nays because the use of mail ballots and drop boxes compromises election integrity. This legislation increases the risk of electoral fraud and disenfranchisement. States should use paper ballots to ensure free, fair, and secure elections.