



Matthew S. Dawson

Rhode Island Representative, HD-065 (D)

Website: rilegislature.gov/representatives/dawson/Pages/Biography.aspx
freedomindex.us/10486/

Scan to view
vote history



2025 RI Legislative Scorecard: 0%

Based on the Principles of the U.S. Constitution

✓ Constitutional	✗ Unconstitutional	— Did not Vote	Vote
1. Collective-bargaining Expansion: Expands collective-bargaining rights for certain employees of the Department of Education.			✗
Constitutional: No · Cast: Yes · H5227 · Passed 69–4 · 06/16/2025			
2. Immigration and Landlords: Prohibits landlords from asking prospective or current tenants about their immigration status.			✗
Constitutional: No · Cast: Yes · H5674 · Passed 70–1 · 06/16/2025			
3. Minimum-wage Increase: Increases the minimum wage to \$16 per hour on January 1, 2026, and then to \$17 per hour on January 1, 2027.			✗
Constitutional: No · Cast: Yes · S0125 · Passed 61–11 · 06/18/2025			
4. Assault-weapons Ban: Bans the sale of so-called assault weapons.			✗
Constitutional: No · Cast: Yes · S0359 · Passed 44–28 · 06/20/2025			
5. 340B Protection: Bars insurers, pharmacy benefit managers, drug manufacturers, or other payors from discriminating against 340B providers.			✗
Constitutional: No · Cast: Yes · S0114 · Passed 58–8 · 06/20/2025			
6. Building Decarbonization Act: Would create a program requiring large buildings in Rhode Island to measure and report their energy and water use and meet state energy-performance standards.			✗
Constitutional: No · Cast: Yes · H5493 · Passed 48–20 · 06/20/2025			



View the Freedom Toolbox

Scan to learn more about the Freedom Index, view legislative alerts, and deepen your understanding of the U.S. Constitution and America's founding principles. Visit <https://freedomindex.us/tools/>

\$297,522

U.S. National Debt Per Household as of September 3, 2026

Why do these votes matter?

1. Collective-bargaining Expansion

H5227 expands collective-bargaining rights for certain employees of the Department of Education. It protects the rights of professional, administrative, and secretarial employees to negotiate over the terms and conditions of their employment.

The Rhode Island State House of Representatives passed H5227 on June 16, 2025 by a vote of 69 to 4. We have assigned pluses to the nays because collective bargaining interferes with individual liberties, and compelling individuals to negotiate collectively infringes upon their right to freely associate or negotiate on an individual basis.

2. Immigration and Landlords

H5674 prohibits landlords from asking prospective or current tenants about their immigration status, except where federal laws or regulations require it. The bill still allows landlords to request financial information or proof of identity, but it bars immigration-status questions in the normal rental process.

The Rhode Island State House of Representatives passed H5674 on June 16, 2025 by a vote of 70 to 1. We have assigned pluses to the nays because illegal migration is, by definition, a crime. This bill denies landlords relevant information they may wish to consider when screening tenants, while extending special protection to those who are in the country illegally, grossly violating property rights protected by the Fourth, Fifth, and Ninth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution. In doing so, it undermines the rule of law, discourages accountability, and moves Rhode Island further toward a sanctuary-style housing policy. Rather than shielding unlawful presence from scrutiny, state lawmakers should support policies that uphold the law, protect U.S. citizens, and respect the constitutional framework under which immigration policy is to be enforced.

3. Minimum-wage Increase

S125 raises the state minimum wage in two steps, increasing to \$16 per hour on January 1, 2026, and then to \$17 per hour on January 1, 2027.

The Rhode Island State House of Representatives passed S125 on June 18, 2025 by a vote of 61 to 11. We have assigned pluses to the nays because minimum-wage laws are anti-constitutional, discriminatory acts of government theft. They forcibly deny the property rights of both employers and employees by violating their freedom of association, preventing individuals from entering into contracts voluntarily according to their own terms. As dishonest and manipulative tactics to control labor in the economy, minimum-wage laws create an unequal balance of wealth confiscation and redistribution, hindering the best workers from getting the best jobs at the best prices.

4. Assault-weapons Ban

S359 bans the unlawful sale of certain firearms classified by the state as prohibited weapons, making it a major gun-control measure aimed at restricting access to so-called assault weapons in Rhode Island.

The Rhode Island State House of Representatives passed S359 on June 6, 2025 by a vote of 44 to 28. We have assigned pluses to the nays because this bill infringes on the Second Amendment, which clearly states that "the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed." Instead of defending constitutionally protected rights, this legislation empowers the state to further erode them under the guise of public safety.

5. 340B Protection

S114 protects certain 340B healthcare providers from being treated differently by insurers, pharmacy benefit managers, drug manufacturers, or other payors because they participate in the federal 340B drug-discount program. It bars those entities from discriminating against 340B providers in the way prescription-drug benefits or reimbursements are handled.

The Rhode Island State House of Representatives passed S114 on June 20, 2025 by a vote of 58 to 8. We have assigned pluses to the nays because states should not support any programs that lack authorization under Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. By forcing private drug manufacturers to comply with mandates that interfere with their freedom to contract, protected under Article I, Section 10, this bill violates constitutional safeguards, undermines federalism, and erodes free-market principles. Rather than protecting liberty, S114 entrenches an unconstitutional federal welfare program and expands government interference in healthcare.

6. Building Decarbonization Act

H5493 would create a program requiring large buildings in Rhode Island to measure and report their energy and water use and meet state energy-performance standards. The bill would expand state regulation over large buildings in the name of decarbonization and energy efficiency.

The Rhode Island State House of Representatives passed H5493 on June 20, 2025 by a vote of 48 to 20. We have assigned pluses to the nays because this legislation expands government interference in the economy and advances the Marxist climate-change agenda. Businesses should have the freedom to conduct business without government meddling. The Declaration of Independence states, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Government interference in entrepreneurship and private business violates those principles.