



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

**DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES
ADMINISTRATION OFFICE**

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April 29, 2026

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney
Chair, House Committee on Finance
State House
Providence, RI 02903

**RE: 2026 H-8391 – AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -
INSPECTION OF MOTOR VEHICLES**

Dear Chair Abney:

The Division of Motor Vehicles (“DMV”) writes to express concerns with House Bill 8391, An Act Relating to Motor and Other Vehicles-Inspection of Motor Vehicles.

Under current law a new motor vehicle is required to pass a safety and emissions inspection within two (2) years from the date of purchase or before the vehicle accumulates 24,000 miles, whichever occurs first. Most vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of 8,500 pounds or less must then pass a safety and emissions inspection on a biennial basis in order to maintain an active registration. The proposed bill would maintain the initial inspection requirement, but would eliminate the biennial safety and emissions inspection for all motor vehicles with a gross weight of 8,500 pounds or under, except motorcycles, until those vehicles are more than twenty (20) years old.

The DMV’s safety and emissions inspection program is integral to ensuring that motor vehicles are being safely and legally operated on Rhode Island’s roadways. Vehicle inspections play a critical role in maintaining roadway safety, environmental protection, and overall vehicle reliability. They are not simply administrative requirements—they are a frontline safeguard against preventable accidents and mechanical failures. Motor vehicles are thoroughly tested for a wide variety of mechanical and emissions related issues during the inspection process. Extending the time period in which motor vehicles are allowed to operate while uninspected would increase the likelihood that issues, such as worn tires and brakes and defective steering and suspension parts, remain undetected. In turn, motor vehicles with such issues that would otherwise be removed from the roadways will be operating and endangering travel for other motorists.

There are additional items checked during the inspection process beyond mechanical wear and tear. Motor vehicles must have an active registration with registration plates that are properly displayed at the time of inspection. Window tint, lighting, exhaust systems, and ride height are checked to determine if illegal modifications have been made. Allowing such a lengthy term of years to lapse before an inspection is required increases the likelihood that motor vehicles will be operating with these issues present.

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In addition to safety, inspections support environmental goals. Emissions testing helps identify vehicles that are producing excessive pollutants due to malfunctioning engines or exhaust systems. By requiring repairs for non-compliant vehicles, the inspection program contributes to improved air quality and reduced public health risks associated with vehicle emissions.

Finally, while the safe operation of motor vehicles on Rhode Island highways is the DMV's paramount concern, it should also be noted that the proposed change will lead to a significant loss of revenue. Just in the calendar year 2025 alone, a total of 403,813 safety and emissions inspections of vehicles with a gross weight of 8,500 pounds or under were performed by Rhode Island certified inspection stations. Those inspections resulted in \$14.3 million in revenue to the state. Out of that total, 323,472 – or 80.1% - of those vehicles were over two years old, but less than twenty years old, accounting for approximately \$11.5 million of that revenue. Those inspections would not have been required under the proposed bill. Additionally, funds from the inspection program are deposited into the Rhode Island Highway Maintenance Account which the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) uses as matching funds for federal grants. RIDOT's match rate is 20%, therefore, a reduction in inspection fee revenue of \$11.5 million would result in a loss of over \$46 million in federal funds, for a total loss of revenue of approximately \$57.5 million.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Walter R. Craddock, Esq.
Administrator

Cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance
The Honorable Deborah A. Fellela
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House
Jane E. Cole, Interim Director, Department of Revenue