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March 11, 2025

The Honorable Robert E. Craven, Sr.
Chairman, House Judiciary Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: House Bill No. H5638 Relating to Motor and Other Vehicles – Accidents and Accident Reports.

Dear Chairman Craven:

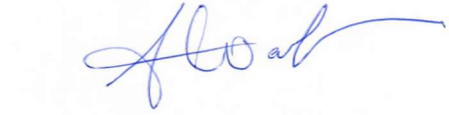
I am writing on behalf of the Rhode Island Police Chiefs Association (RIPCA) to voice our strong support for the House bill referenced above regarding the increase of penalties for individuals that fail to stop at an accident resulting in personal injury; driving so as to endanger, resulting in death; Driving under the influence of liquor or drugs, resulting in death.

I am writing to urge your support for stronger penalties for individuals who fit into one of the categories noted above. The current legal consequences in Rhode Island fail to serve as a sufficient deterrent, allowing offenders to evade responsibility and leaving grieving families without justice. It is essential that we enact stricter measures to hold offenders accountable and enhance public safety. Hit-and-run accidents causing fatalities and /or serious bodily injuries are a growing concern, and the current sentencing limitations provide little deterrence

By enacting tougher penalties, we can create a legal framework that prioritizes justice for victims and their families while discouraging reckless and irresponsible actions on our roads. I urge you to support these legislative efforts to address this critical issue and work towards meaningful reform.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this written testimony on behalf of the RIPCA and as always, I am available for any follow-up questions you or the committee may have, and we are willing to continue discussions with the bill's sponsors.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Wordell", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sidney Wordell
Executive Director
Rhode Island Police Chiefs Association