

**Kenneth J. Hopkins**  
Mayor



**Colonel Michael J. Winquist**  
Chief of Police

*"A Nationally Accredited Agency"*

5 GARFIELD AVENUE  
CRANSTON, RHODE ISLAND 02920  
Phone (401) 942-2211 TDD 943-1410  
Fax (401) 477-5113

February 13, 2026

Chair Carol McEntee and Members  
House Judiciary Committee  
Rhode Island General Assembly

**RE: Opposition to House Bill 7354: Lane Filtering for Motorcycles**

Dear Chair McEntee and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to **House Bill 7354**, which seeks to amend Chapter 31-15 of the General Laws to allow for "lane filtering" by two-wheeled motorcycles. While the intent may be to reduce traffic congestion, this bill introduces significant safety risks to Rhode Island roadways.

The primary danger of this legislation lies in the unpredictable nature of lane filtering. Motorists do not typically expect vehicles to pass within their own lane, and the following factors make this practice inherently hazardous:

- **Limited Visibility:** Drivers are conditioned to monitor the lanes around them, but a motorcycle filtering between cars often enters a motorist's blind spot. This makes it nearly impossible for a driver to see a motorcycle approaching from behind until it is directly alongside them.
- **Auditory Awareness:** Despite common misconceptions, modern vehicle soundproofing often prevents drivers from hearing a motorcycle approaching from the rear, especially when the motorcycle is traveling at the low speeds (under 20 mph) dictated by this bill.
- **Driver Reaction Times:** If a motorist needs to make a sudden lane adjustment to avoid a road hazard or pothole, a filtering motorcycle provides zero margin for error, likely leading to a collision.

Under the proposed Section 31-15-1.1, motorcycles would be permitted to overtake vehicles traveling at speeds up to 10 mph, while the motorcycle itself may travel up to 20 mph. This 10-mph speed differential in such close proximity to other vehicles is a recipe for "sideswipe" accidents and startled maneuvers by drivers who are unaware they are being passed.

Lane filtering places an undue burden on Rhode Island motorists to monitor the narrow gaps between lanes, a practice that contradicts standard defensive driving training. To ensure the safety of all road users, I urge the Committee to **vote against H 7354**.

Thank you for your time and for your dedication to the safety of our community.

Respectfully submitted,

*Col. Michael J. Winqist*

Colonel Michael J. Winqist  
Chief of Police  
Cranston Police Department