



## RHODE ISLAND POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

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Rhode Island Supreme Court

April 28, 2026

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee  
Chair, House Judiciary Committee  
Rhode Island State House  
Providence, RI 02903  
[HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseJudiciary@rilegislature.gov)

### **Support H. 7489 – ignition interlock**

Dear Chairwoman McEntee and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Police Chiefs Association, I write in strong support of H. 7489, legislation relating to motor vehicle offenses and impaired driving enforcement.

Impaired driving remains one of the most persistent and dangerous threats on our roadways. While Rhode Island saw a historic reduction in traffic fatalities in 2025, with 37 lives lost, even one fatality is too many—and far too many of these tragedies continue to involve impaired drivers. Behind each of these numbers is a family, a community, and a loss that cannot be undone.

H. 7489 represents a comprehensive and necessary update to Rhode Island's DUI laws. The legislation strengthens accountability for impaired drivers through enhanced penalties, reinforces the use of ignition interlock systems, and ensures that individuals convicted of these offenses are subject to appropriate monitoring, treatment, and education requirements. These are proven, evidence-based strategies that reduce repeat offenses and improve roadway safety.

Importantly, this bill also reflects the evolving nature of impaired driving. Law enforcement officers are increasingly encountering drivers impaired not only by alcohol, but by drugs or a combination of substances. H. 7489 supports modern enforcement practices, including the use of certified chemical testing and drug recognition expertise, ensuring that our laws keep pace with current challenges.

From a law enforcement perspective, H. 7489 provides clarity, consistency, and necessary tools for officers, prosecutors, and the courts. It enhances our ability to intervene before tragedy occurs while reinforcing the message that impaired driving will not be tolerated in Rhode Island.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to support H. 7489.

Sincerely,

Chief Sidney Wordell (ret.)  
Executive Director  
Rhode Island Police Chiefs Association