



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

**DIVISION OF MOTOR VEHICLES  
ADMINISTRATION OFFICE**

600 New London Avenue  
Cranston, RI 02920-3024  
Phone: 401-462-4368  
[www.dmv.ri.gov](http://www.dmv.ri.gov)

April 28, 2026

The Honorable Carol Hagan McEntee  
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary  
State House  
Providence, RI 02903

**RE: 2026 H-7489 - AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES –  
MOTOR VEHICLE OFFENSES**

Dear Chair McEntee:

The Division of Motor Vehicles (“DMV”) writes to express concerns regarding House Bill 7489, An Act Relating to Motor and Other Vehicles – Motor Vehicle Offenses.

The proposed bill would impose a requirement that any sentence for individuals convicted of a charge of driving under the influence of liquor or drugs, or of refusing to submit to a chemical test, must include the installation of an ignition interlock system in the offender’s vehicle prior to that person being eligible for license reinstatement. The proposed bill would also require that any ignition interlock system be equipped with a camera in order to accurately identify the driver who provides a breath sample. Finally, the proposed bill would also create an ignition interlock system fund for indigent defendants.

One of the DMV’s concerns is that the proposed bill mandates that any ignition interlock system imposed under the statute must be equipped with a camera “in order to accurately identify the driver who provides a breath sample.” Nowhere, however, does the proposed bill indicate which entity is responsible for monitoring the photographs produced by the camera system. The DMV previously engaged in the monitoring of ignition interlock breath samples, but that strict oversight was eliminated from R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-49-3(b) in 2016 with the passage of P.L. 2016, ch. 127, § 2 and P.L. 2016, ch. 141 § 2. Currently, the DMV simply ensures that the motorist has complied with the installation of the ignition interlock device as ordered by the sentencing Judge or Magistrate, with reliance on the fact that the device will function as prescribed and prevent an individual who has been drinking from being able to start their vehicle. No additional monitoring is statutorily authorized nor is any conducted by the DMV. Furthermore, the DMV presently does not have the resources to review photographs from every breathalyzer sample provided by every individual in the State of Rhode Island who is required to utilize an ignition interlock system as part of their court sentence. Presently, there are over 700 individuals with an interlock restriction on their driver’s license, and that number would likely increase significantly under the proposed legislation. It is not clear from the proposed bill whether round-the-clock real time

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monitoring of the photographs would be required, but whichever agency is tasked with that responsibility would need to hire additional staff in order to properly fulfill that role. If that monitoring responsibility were to fall on DMV, not only would it contradict legislative changes noted above, but would likely require changes to 280-RICR-30-15-9, Rules and Regulations Governing the Certification and Use of Ignition Interlock Systems, to impose camera requirements on interlock companies. This may require additional time beyond six months requested below to promulgate. Also, while the camera requirement is presumably prospective, that should be made clear with explicit language that the requirement is for convictions on or after a certain date. Otherwise, all existing interlock users will have to swap out existing devices.

Additionally, while the proposed provisions requiring payment of a one hundred dollar (\$100) assessment to the ignition interlock system fund, created by proposed R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-27-2.10, indicate that this new \$100 assessment is in addition to any other fines and highway assessments, it is not clear whether this fee is in addition to the \$100 administrative fee required by R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-49-2 to be paid by persons ordered to install an ignition interlock system. If the intent is for the new fee to be in addition to this administrative fee, that should be made clear in the proposed provisions with an explicit reference to § 31-49-2.

Finally, while the responsibility for administering the ignition interlock system fund is assigned to the General Treasurer, the proposed bill does not indicate which agency is to collect the fee. That responsibility would most naturally lie with the courts, but if it is to be DMV's duty, it would require modifications to the DMV's computer system which, in light of ongoing projects and customer service upgrades, would require at least six months to complete after passage of the bill.

The DMV looks forward to working with the sponsor to determine if provisions can be drafted to further the goals of the proposed bill and ensure that unsafe motorists do not operate on Rhode Island's roads and highways.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Walter R. Craddock, Esq.  
Administrator

Cc: The Honorable Members of the House Committee on Judiciary  
The Honorable Thomas E. Noret  
Nicole McCarty, Esq., Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House  
Jane E. Cole, Interim Director, Department of Revenue