



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

June 10, 2026

Dear Chair McEntee and Judiciary Committee Members,

I write to you on behalf of AAA Northeast, our 549,000 members in the Ocean State, and our more than 1300 Rhode Island based employees, in strong support of House Bill 8094, “Relating to Motor and Other Vehicles—Miscellaneous Rules,” strengthening criminal penalties for offenders related to “the dangers which may result from the accumulation of excessive temperatures within the motor vehicle.” My thanks to Representative Matt Dawson for his introduction of the bill.

For many years, AAA Northeast has been messaging the hazards of leaving children and pets in hot cars to its members and the general public—sounding the alarm through press releases, press events, media interviews and child passenger safety checks. Five children have died in hot cars across the country so far this year, and there were 32 pediatric vehicular heat stroke deaths in 2025 according to NoHeatStroke.org.

On a typical 80-degree summer day, the interior temperature of a vehicle climbs by 20 degrees in only 10 minutes and reaches a deadly 109 degrees in 20 minutes. On even hotter days, the interior temperature can easily reach 120 to 140 degrees, and cracking the windows has little to no effect.

More than half of pediatric vehicular heat stroke deaths from 1998 to 2025 occurred among children under 2 years old, with 53% forgotten by a caregiver, 24% gaining access to a vehicle on their own, and 22% knowingly left in the car. House Bill 8094 will strengthen the criminal penalties associated with these potentially deadly incidents.

AAA Northeast strongly encourages passage of H8094. Thank you for your consideration of this life and death issue, which will help keep our children safer in the Ocean State.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mary Maguire'.

Mary Maguire, Vice President, Public/Government Affairs



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