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## **ACLU OF RI POSITION: OPPOSE**

### **TESTIMONY ON 26-H 8384, RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES April 28, 2026**

The ACLU of Rhode Island opposes this legislation, which would create new criminal penalties for engaging in “road rage.”

This is one of a series of bills dealing with traffic infractions that propose to send people to prison for longer periods of time, impose greater fines, and suspend licenses for longer periods as the solution to driving infractions. But establishing steeper penalties for such conduct will not deter this behavior but will divert resources away from approaches that might be more effective.

In particular, this legislation would enhance the penalties for “road rage” to include mandatory fines and, for felony convictions, a prison sentence of at least two years and not more than fifteen years. The bill’s definition of “road rage,” which includes behavior of a driver or passenger that is “intentionally aggressive, harassing, threatening, intimidating, or dangerous, and that is directed toward another” driver or passenger is extremely vague, overly broad, and bound to lead to arbitrary and discriminatory enforcement.

Under this bill, a driver could lose their license for a year – or even receive time in prison if they are engaged in a more serious traffic violation – merely for “giving the finger” to another driver. And, although we do not know exactly how it would work, the definition even applies to the conduct of a car *passenger*.

We urge the committee to oppose any efforts to implement increased penalties schemes like these and to additionally reject this bill because of its breadth and vagueness.

Thank you for considering our views.