

Testimony in Support of House Bill 7302

Special Legislation Committee
Rhode Island House of Representatives

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I respectfully submit testimony in support of **House Bill 7302**, by Rep. Carson – Newport, which authorizes the Division of Motor Vehicles to issue a specialty license plate supporting the Lime Rock Foundation.

This specialty plate would highlight and help bring broader public recognition to **Ida Lewis**, one of Rhode Island’s most remarkable historical figures. Ida Lewis served as the keeper of the Lime Rock Lighthouse in Newport in the 19th century and is widely known for her extraordinary bravery, rescuing numerous people from the waters of Newport Harbor during dangerous conditions. Her courage and dedication to saving lives made her a nationally recognized hero in her time and an enduring symbol of Rhode Island’s maritime history.

In August of 2025, Ida Lewis was given “The Posthumous Lighthouse Keeper” award from the National Lighthouse Foundation.

The **Lime Rock Foundation** works to preserve and elevate Ida Lewis’s legacy, ensuring that her contributions—and the broader history of maritime safety and service she represents—are remembered and shared with future generations. A specialty license plate would provide a visible and meaningful way to recognize this legacy across Rhode Island.

Specialty license plates have long allowed Rhode Islanders to express pride in our state’s history and support organizations that preserve it. This plate would give residents the opportunity to celebrate the life and legacy of Ida Lewis while supporting the foundation’s efforts to educate the public about her story.

Importantly, participation is entirely voluntary. Residents who wish to support this effort may do so by choosing the plate, while also helping ensure that Rhode Island’s rich maritime history—and the heroism of Ida Lewis—continues to be recognized.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to support passage of House Bill 7302.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jan D. Slee
Chair
Lime Rock Foundation
RI Charity License Plate Committee