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April 24, 2025

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley
Chairman
House State Government & Elections
State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: 2025 AN ACT RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES- OPERATION OF BICYCLES

Dear Chairman Shanley :

Thank you for the opportunity to allow the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) to respectfully submit this letter of concern for H 5192. This bill "Requires anyone using a bicycle trail or path to stay to the right on the path and would always pass on the left when safe to do so."

RIDOT respectfully requests on page 1, line |10 |to be removed from this language. This bill specifically requests RIDOT "promulgate and enforce rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this section." RIDOT has no enforcement capabilities. Given this involves traffic related violations, we respectfully recommend this be directed to agencies that have law enforcement capabilities.

Additionally, this requested change is in direct conflict with current law §31-18-11 which directs pedestrians to travel on the left, facing traffic. This bill proposes they travel on the right, which would put their backs to on-coming traffic. We have attached §31-18-11 to assist you in your review of this legislation.

For these reasons, RIDOT respectfully requests to be exempt from this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information and for your diligence in reviewing this piece of legislation. Please let me know if any further information is needed.

Sincerely,

Peter Alviti, Jr., P.E.
Director, Rhode Island Department of Transportation

cc: The Honorable Members of the House State Government & Elections Committee
The Honorable June Speakman
Nicole McCarty Esq. Chief Legal Counsel

Title 31

Motor and Other Vehicles

Chapter 18

Pedestrians

R.I. Gen. Laws § 31-18-11

§ 31-18-11. Walking, jogging, or running on left.

(a) Where sidewalks are not provided any person walking, jogging, or running along and upon a highway shall, when practicable, walk, jog or run only on the left side of the roadway or its shoulder facing traffic which may approach from the opposite direction. Under no circumstances shall anyone walk, run, or jog on any interstate highway within this state.

(b) Any person jogging or running during the time from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise, shall, in addition, wear reflective material which is visible by low beam headlamps from a distance of at least five hundred feet (500'). In no event, shall the failure to wear reflective clothing be considered as contributing negligence, nor shall the failure to wear reflective clothing be admissible as evidence in the trial of any civil action.

(c) Any person who violates the provisions of this section shall, upon conviction, be fined fifteen dollars (\$15.00). If the person has been charged with failure to wear reflective material they shall be issued a citation. If any person issued a citation presents proof of purchase of reflectorized clothing or the minimum amount of reflectorized material to the issuing police department within ten (10) days, the department shall void the violation. Should an individual issued a citation fail to present the proof of purchase within the prescribed time, he or she shall be fined fifteen dollars (\$15.00). The fine shall be paid by mail and paid to the traffic tribunal and shall not be recorded on the driving record of the violator.

(d) Any person found to have violated the provisions of this section more than once shall, upon conviction, be fined twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for each subsequent conviction.

History of Section.

P.L. 1950, ch. 2595, art. 29, § 6; G.L. 1956, § 31-18-11; P.L. 1984, ch. 298, § 1.