

## **Testimony on House Bill 7308**

### **Relating To Motor And Other Vehicles -- Parking Facilities And Privileges**

Tuesday, January 27, 2026

Chairman Shanley and members of the House State Government and Elections Committee:

My name is Zachary Gauthier. I am a man living with cerebral palsy, and I rely on a wheelchair for my mobility and my independence. I am writing to you today in support of House Bill 7308 because I believe that the tools of independence for the disability community must be protected and respected by the law.

While I do not personally own an adaptive vehicle, I know exactly what it is like to navigate a world that is often not built for us. For my peers who use vehicles equipped with ramps and lifts, the struggle for accessible parking and loading zones is a daily battle. When those spaces are blocked or when specialized vehicles are not recognized, it is a direct blow to the dignity of every person in a wheelchair.

House Bill 7308 is the solution because it creates a specific "Adaptive Vehicle License Plate." This designation provides the teeth needed for real enforcement. It ensures that the Governor's Commission on Disabilities has the authority to make sure our rights are not just suggestions, but the law.

We need to ensure that the people who face these challenges every day are seen and respected. Even though I do not have an adaptive vehicle myself, I stand in solidarity with those who do, because their independence is my independence.

I am asking you to look beyond the paperwork and see the human beings who are fighting for their dignity today. Please pass House Bill 7308 and show that the disability community is a priority in this state.

Thank you for your time.

Zachary Gauthier  
1247 Atwood Avenue  
Johnston, RI 02919  
zag198705@gmail.com