

Steven Sepe

From: Pat Foley <patdafolee@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 30, 2026 7:32 PM
To: House State Government and Elections Committee
Subject: SUPPORT (H7576) - Access to Public Traffic Crash Records

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Dear Chair Shanley and Committee members,

My name is Pat Foley, I live in Edgewood, and I am writing in support of Bill H7576, Rep. Kislak's Access to Public Records Act that would make traffic crash data publicly available in Rhode Island, as in 42 other states.

According to RIDOT's FY2025 Highway Safety Improvement Program Annual Report, 556 people were killed in traffic crashes in Rhode Island between 2016 and 2024, and 2,664 were seriously injured. But because RIDOT does not grant public access to crash records, very little else is known about these tragedies and life-changing events — where they took place, what time of day or year, what type of vehicles were involved, what the weather conditions were, etc.

You can't manage what you don't measure: data is crucial for solving problems like traffic violence. Many state DOTs, like MassDOT, maintain their own data portals so the public can see where crashes are occurring, and work towards safety improvements that protect human life and limb. This is a common sense step for our shared fight to make streets safer for all road users.

When the government hides this information from the public, it's not just researchers, advocates, and journalists whose work is impeded. It's every family seeking answers after a tragedy and every voter trying to hold public institutions accountable. Rhode Island should not remain a national outlier in secrecy — this public records reform now before the Committee is an essential step toward the open government we all deserve.

I please urge you to support H7576.

Sincerely,
Pat Foley
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