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June 21, 2021

The Honorable Evan P. Shanley
Chairman
House Committee on State Government and Elections
State House
Providence, RI 02903

RE: 2021- H-6434, RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES – SIZE, WEIGHT, AND LOAD LIMITS

Dear Chairman Shanley:

Please accept this written testimony as support for House Bill H-6434 which would authorize the RI Department of Transportation to impose a weight restriction or close any state, local or privately-owned bridge, in the interest of public safety.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires States to place a weight restriction or close bridges as necessary within 30 days of notification of the issue warranting a weight restriction or closure. This requirement is part of the National Bridge Inspection Standards (NBIS) and the State is held accountable regardless of ownership for any bridge that is subject to the NBIS. As an extension of RIGL 31-25-27 (Weight restrictions on state highways), RIDOT would be granted legal authority to implement a weight restriction or close any bridge regardless of ownership if needed based on a bridge inspection or structural analysis performed by the RIDOT.

For both public safety and satisfying the NBIS, RIDOT seeks legal authority to place a weight restriction or close any bridge regardless of ownership based on a bridge inspection or structural analysis performed by RIDOT in the event an owner not have adequate resources to meet the 30-day requirement. For these reasons, RIDOT supports the passage of this bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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

