

2026 -- H 7822

LC005805

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FORENSIC AUDIT ACT

Introduced By: Representative Charlene Lima

Date Introduced: February 26, 2026

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 42 of the General Laws entitled "STATE AFFAIRS AND  
2 GOVERNMENT" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 13.2

4 RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FORENSIC AUDIT ACT

5 **42-13.2-1. Definitions.**

6 As used in this chapter:

7 (1) "Attorney general" means the Rhode Island attorney general.

8 (2) "Department" means the Rhode Island department of transportation

9 (3) "Forensic audit" means a specialized, in-depth examination of an organization's  
10 financial records and transactions to detect and document potential fraud, misconduct, or other  
11 financial irregularities conducted in accordance with this chapter.

12 **42-13.2-2. Requirement to commission forensic audit.**

13 (a) The attorney general shall commission an independent forensic audit of the department  
14 within thirty (30) days following the passage of this chapter.

15 (b) The audit shall be performed by an independently nationally accredited firm with  
16 demonstrated expertise in transportation systems, infrastructure finance, and public-sector  
17 performance benchmarking.

18 (c) Any and all state agencies and offices shall cooperate with said audit and shall provide

1 any and all assistance and information requested.

2 (d) The audit shall be completed and delivered to the governor and the general assembly  
3 on or before January 1, 2027.

4 **42-13.2-3. Scope of audit.**

5 (a) The audit shall include, but not be limited to, the following areas:

6 (1) Project delivery efficiency, including schedule adherence, cost escalation trends,  
7 change orders, procurement cycle time, and delivery outcomes;

8 (2) Asset management, including pavement, bridges, culverts, intelligent transportation  
9 systems assets, backlog replacement needs, and lifecycle cost analysis;

10 (3) Workforce and organizational structure, including ratio of in-house staff to consultants,  
11 vacancy rates, engineering capacity, and impacts on project delivery and oversight;

12 (4) Maintenance efficiency, including cost per lane-mile, snow and ice operations  
13 productivity, maintenance productivity, and equipment utilization;

14 (5) Financial management, including forecasting accuracy, cash-flow controls, use and  
15 tracking of federal funds, and alignment with the state transportation improvement program (STIP)  
16 and transportation improvement program (TIP); and

17 (6) Governance and oversight, including internal controls, performance reporting,  
18 transparency practices, and compliance with responsible charge requirements.

19 (b) The audit pursuant to this section shall be separate and independent of any audit  
20 conducted by the auditor general pursuant to chapter 13 of title 22 (“auditor general”).

21 **42-13.2-4. Appropriation.**

22 There is hereby appropriated from the department of transportation budget for the fiscal  
23 year 2026-2027, the sum of four hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$450,000,000) to cover the cost of  
24 the audit provided for herein.

25 **42-13.2-5. Procurement and contracting practices.**

26 (a) Upon completion, the audit shall be submitted to:

27 (1) The governor;

28 (2) The president of the senate;

29 (3) The speaker of the house of representatives; and

30 (4) The chairs of the house and senate finance committees.

31 (b) The final audit report shall be made publicly available on the DOT’s website.

32 **42-13.2-6. Cooperation and access to records.**

33 The department shall cooperate fully with the audit and provide access to all records, data,  
34 contracts, and personnel reasonably necessary to complete the audit.

1 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO STATE AFFAIRS AND GOVERNMENT -- RHODE ISLAND  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FORENSIC AUDIT ACT

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- 1           This act would require that an independent forensic audit of the department of
- 2           transportation be commissioned by the attorney general.
- 3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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