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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

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A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- TIRE EFFICIENCY STANDARDS

Introduced By: Representatives Handy, McGaw, Cortvriend, Kislak, Tanzi, Cruz, Potter,
and McNamara

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Legislative findings.

2 (a) The legislature finds that:

3 (1) Replacement tires for passenger cars and light trucks are less energy efficient, on
4 average, than tires installed as original equipment on new vehicles.

5 (2) Independent testing of available tires has demonstrated that available technologies can
6 cost-effectively improve replacement tire efficiency without compromising product longevity or
7 safety.

8 (3) Replacement tire efficiency standards will reduce gasoline and electricity waste, thus
9 saving consumers and businesses money.

10 (4) Such efficiency standards will reduce harmful air pollutant emissions that threaten
11 public health, especially for overburdened communities near highways through reduced
12 transportation-related air pollution.

13 (5) Gasoline and electricity savings also reduce emissions that contribute to climate change.

14 (6) Monetary savings resulting from more efficient replacement tires benefit all consumers,
15 but are especially important to low-income families, who spend a disproportionate share of their
16 income on fuel costs.

17 (7) Efficiency standards also help the state and local economies because savings at the
18 pump and on electric bills can be spent on local goods and services.

19 (8) Electricity savings help reduce or delay the need for expensive investments in new

1 power plants, transmission lines, and distribution system upgrades.

2 SECTION 2. Title 31 of the General Laws entitled "MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES"
3 is hereby amended by adding thereto the following chapter:

4 CHAPTER 23.4

5 TIRE EFFICIENCY STANDARDS

6 **31-23.4-1. Purpose.**

7 This chapter provides for the adoption of minimum efficiency standards for new
8 replacement tires sold or installed in the state.

9 **31-23.4-2. Definitions.**

10 As used in the chapter:

11 (1) "Compensation" means money or any other valuable thing, regardless of form, received
12 or to be received by a person for services rendered.

13 (2) "Department" means the department of transportation, division of motor vehicles.

14 (3) "Light-duty truck" means any motor vehicle other than a passenger car with a gross
15 vehicle weight rating not exceeding ten thousand pounds (10,000 lbs.).

16 (4) "Passenger car" means any motor vehicle designed primarily for transportation of
17 persons, having a design capacity of twelve (12) persons or less, with a gross vehicle weight rating
18 not exceeding ten thousand pounds (10,000 lbs.).

19 (5) "Person" means:

20 (i) Any individual

21 (ii) Any corporation, company, association, firm, partnership, society, trust, joint venture,
22 or joint stock company.

23 (6) "Replacement tire" means a tire sold or offered for sale in the state, except a tire sold:

24 (i) At wholesale for final retail sale outside the state; or

25 (ii) With a new passenger car or light-duty truck.

26 (iii) "Rolling resistance coefficient" means the ratio of the rolling resistance force, in
27 newtons, to the load on the tire in kilonewtons.

28 (7) "Tire brand name owner" means a person, other than a tire manufacturer, who owns or
29 has the right to control the brand name of a tire or a person who licenses another to purchase tires
30 from a tire manufacturer bearing the licensor's brand name.

31 (8) "Wet grip" means the capacity of a tire to maintain adhesion and provide braking
32 performance on a wet paved surface.

33 (9) "Tire manufacturer" means a person manufacturing or importing replacement tires for
34 sale in the state.

1 **31-23.4-3. Standards.**

2 (a) Not later than eighteen (18) months after enactment of this chapter, the department shall
3 adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of the chapter 35 of title 42 ("administrative
4 procedures"), establishing energy efficiency standards for new replacement tires for passenger cars
5 and light-duty trucks at levels that serve to promote energy conservation in the state and will be
6 cost effective for consumers who purchase and use such new replacement tires;

7 (1) Tire efficiency shall be tested in accordance with Section 575.106 of Title 49 of the
8 Code of Federal Regulations (Tire fuel efficiency consumer information program), as in effect on
9 the date of enactment of this chapter;

10 (2) The department shall also adopt minimum requirements for wet grip performance, as
11 tested in accordance with ISO 23671(2021) ("Passenger Car Tires - Method for Measuring Relative
12 Wet Grip Braking Performance - Loaded New Tires,") to ensure that wet grip is maintained or
13 enhanced as tire efficiency improves;

14 (3) The standards adopted by the department under this section may not adversely affect
15 tire safety or tire longevity; and

16 (4) The department shall consider and adopt separate standards or exemptions for specialty
17 tires, such as dedicated winter-type snow tires, spare use tires, tires manufactured specifically for
18 use in vehicles with three (3) or fewer wheels, and tires manufactured specifically for use in offroad
19 recreational or agricultural motor vehicles.

20 (b) The department may also adopt a rating system for the energy efficiency and wet grip
21 of new replacement tires, considering rating systems adopted by other states.

22 **31-23.4-4. Implementation.**

23 (a) Twelve (12) months after the department adopts standards under § 31-23.4-3, no new
24 replacement tire may be sold or offered for sale in the state unless it meets the requirements
25 established by the department.

26 (b) One year after the date upon which the sale or offering for sale of new replacement tires
27 becomes subject to the requirements of subsection (a) of this section, no new replacement tire may
28 be installed for compensation in the state unless the tire meets the requirements established by the
29 department.

30 (c) New replacement tires sold or offered for sale to state residents present in the state must
31 meet the requirements established by the department regardless of the seller's physical location,
32 including, without limitation, any sales or offers to sell made through means other than in-person
33 transactions, such as internet, telephone, or mail order communications.

34 **31-23.4-5. Revisions and future standards.**

1 (a) The department may adopt regulations, in accordance with the chapter 35 of title 42, to
2 establish increased efficiency standards for new replacement tires. In considering such amended
3 standards, the department shall set efficiency standards upon a determination that increased
4 efficiency standards would serve to promote energy conservation in the state and would be cost
5 effective for consumers who purchase and use such new products; provided that, no new or
6 increased efficiency standards shall become effective within one year following the adoption of
7 any amended regulations establishing such increased efficiency standards.

8 (b) The department may also adopt regulations to establish increased wet grip standards
9 for new replacement tires to ensure that wet grip is maintained or enhanced as tire efficiency
10 improves.

11 **31-23.4-6. Testing, certification, labeling, and enforcement.**

12 (a) Tire manufacturers and tire brand name owners of new replacement tires covered by
13 this chapter shall test samples of their products in accordance with the test procedures adopted
14 pursuant to this chapter. The department may adopt updated test methods by regulation when
15 improved test methods become available or when an alternative test method has been adopted by
16 another state or the federal government.

17 (b) Tire manufacturers of new replacement tires covered by this chapter shall certify to the
18 department, or to an approved third-party database as determined by the department, that such tires
19 are in compliance with the provisions of this chapter. The department shall promulgate regulations
20 governing the certification of such tires and shall coordinate with the certification programs of other
21 states with similar standards.

22 (c) The department may require that energy efficiency and wet grip ratings, if established
23 under § 31-23.4-3, be displayed to consumers at the physical or online point of sale.

24 (d) The department may test new replacement tires covered by this chapter. If tires tested
25 are found not to be in compliance with the standards established under § 31-23.4-3, the department
26 shall:

27 (1) Charge the manufacturer of such tires for the cost of product purchase and testing; and

28 (2) Make information available to the attorney general and the public on tires found not to
29 be in compliance with the standards.

30 (e) The department may cause periodic inspections to be made of distributors or retailers
31 of new replacement tires covered by this chapter in order to determine compliance with the
32 provisions of this chapter. The department shall investigate complaints received concerning
33 violations of this chapter.

34 (f) If the department finds that any person has committed a violation of any provision of

1 this chapter, the department shall issue a warning to such person. Any person who commits a
2 violation after the issuance of such warning shall be subject to a civil penalty, issued by the
3 department, of up to one hundred dollars (\$100) for each offense. Any further violations committed
4 by such person after this second violation shall be subject to a civil penalty of not more than five
5 hundred dollars (\$500) for each offense. Each new replacement tire offered, sold, or distributed in
6 violation of § 31-23.4-4, shall constitute a separate violation, each violation shall constitute a
7 separate offense, and each day that such violation occurs shall constitute a separate offense.
8 Penalties assessed under this subsection are in addition to costs assessed under subsection (d) of
9 this section.

10 (g) If the department finds repeated violations have occurred, they shall report the results
11 of such violations to the attorney general. The attorney general may institute proceedings to seek
12 an injunction in court to enforce the provisions of this chapter.

13 (h) The department may adopt such further regulations as necessary to ensure the proper
14 implementation and enforcement of the provisions of this chapter.

15 **31-23.4-7. Severability.**

16 The provisions of this chapter shall be severable, and if the application of any clause,
17 sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or part of this chapter shall be adjudged by any court of
18 competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such judgment shall not affect, impair, or invalidate the
19 application of any other clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or part of this chapter.

20 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- TIRE EFFICIENCY STANDARDS

- 1 This act would establish efficiency standards for tires intended to increase efficiency and
- 2 improve emissions standards.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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