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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 PROPERTY -- HOMELESS BILL OF RIGHTS

Introduced By: Representatives Shekarchi, Speakman, Spears, Voas, DeSimone, Biah,  
Noret, and O'Brien

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: House Municipal Government & Housing

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 34-37.1 of the General Laws entitled "Homeless Bill of Rights" is  
2 hereby amended by adding thereto the following section:

3 **34-37.1-7. Encampments.**

4 (a) Prior to the forcible removal or relocation of encampments on public property, the  
5 removing agency shall provide at least fifteen (15) days written notice to the occupants stating the  
6 timeframe to vacate the encampment, and shall provide a copy of such notice to local homelessness  
7 outreach agencies of the same, unless:

8 (1) Such encampments are located within a state or federal right of way and there is an  
9 immediate public safety need for the removal of the encampment; or

10 (2) Such encampments are located in or directly adjacent to an active construction site; or

11 (3) The encampment interferes with scheduled public infrastructure repairs, maintenance  
12 or inspections; or

13 (4) The encampment is on or near an area which has environmental hazards; or

14 (5) There is otherwise an immediate public safety or health concern regarding the location  
15 of the encampment.

16 (b) An encampment is defined as a temporary shelter erected outdoors in public spaces not  
17 meant for human habitation which may be inhabited by an individual or individuals, and such term  
18 refers to both individuals and their respective personal belongings.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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- 1           This act would provide certain procedures that must be followed before an encampment
- 2   can be removed or relocated.
- 3           This act would take effect upon passage.

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