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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 -- INSPECTION OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Introduced By: Representative Deborah A. Fellela

Date Introduced: April 01, 2026

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 31-38-4 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-38 entitled "Inspection  
2 of Motor Vehicles" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **31-38-4. Director of department of revenue to require periodic inspection.**

4 (a)(1) The director of revenue shall at least once each year, but not more frequently than  
5 twice each year, or on the schedule defined pursuant to chapter 47.1 of this title require that every  
6 vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, and pole trailer registered in this state or upon a retail seller's premise,  
7 be inspected and that an official certificate of inspection and approval be obtained for the vehicle,  
8 provided, that the director of revenue shall require the first inspection of any new motor vehicle  
9 within two (2) years from the date of purchase or before the vehicle accumulates twenty-four  
10 thousand (24,000) miles whichever occurs first. After this first inspection, all motor vehicles except  
11 motorcycles, registered with a gross weight of eight thousand five hundred pounds (8,500 lbs.) or  
12 less, shall not require a further inspection for emission and safety items until the motor vehicles are  
13 at least twenty (20) years old. Motor vehicles that are more than twenty (20) years old shall be  
14 inspected for emissions and safety items biennially.

15 (2) The inspections shall be made and the certificates obtained with respect to the  
16 mechanism, brakes, and equipment of the vehicle as shall be designated by the director of  
17 department of revenue.

18 (3) The director of the department of revenue is authorized to make necessary rules and  
19 regulations for the administration and enforcement of this chapter including, but not limited to,

1 upgraded standards of operation and standards for mechanical testing equipment, and to designate  
2 any period or periods of time during which sellers at retail and owners of any vehicles, subject to  
3 this chapter, shall display upon the vehicles certificates of inspection and approval, or shall produce  
4 these certificates upon demand of any proper officer or employee of the department of revenue  
5 designated by the director of the department of revenue. In addition, the director shall require each  
6 inspection facility to file a copy of their active garage keeper's legal liability insurance policy and  
7 maintain a minimum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) liability coverage. Said coverage  
8 shall be purchased for the purpose of insuring against any damage sustained to a vehicle while  
9 under the control of the inspection facility.

10 (b) The director of the department of revenue may authorize the acceptance in this state of  
11 a certificate of inspection and approval issued in another state having an inspection law similar to  
12 this chapter, and may extend the time within which a certificate shall be obtained.

13 (c) The director of the department of revenue, or the director's designee, may suspend the  
14 registration of any vehicle which he or she determines is in such unsafe condition as to constitute  
15 a menace to safety, or which, after notice and demand, is not equipped as required in this chapter  
16 or for which a required certificate of inspection and approval has not been obtained.

17 (d) The director of the department of revenue shall provide for a staggered inspection  
18 system by regulations.

19 (e) Violations of this section are subject to fines enumerated in § 31-41.1-4.

20 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect on January 1, 2027.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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1           This act would provide that after the first motor vehicle inspection, all motor vehicles  
2           except motorcycles, registered with a gross weight of eight thousand five hundred pounds (8,500  
3           lbs.) or less, would not require a further inspection until the motor vehicles are at least twenty (20)  
4           years old. Thereafter, inspections would be required biennially.

5           This act would take effect on January 1, 2027.

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