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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 ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES -- REGULATION OF SALES

Introduced By: Senators Dimitri, Thompson, and Famiglietti

Date Introduced: January 16, 2026

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 3-8-9 of the General Laws in Chapter 3-8 entitled "Regulation of  
2   Sales" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3           **3-8-9. Transportation of alcoholic beverages by underage persons.**

4           (a) ~~Any person who has not reached his or her twenty-first (21st) birthday and who operates~~  
5 ~~a motor vehicle upon the public highways, except when accompanied by a parent, legal guardian,~~  
6 ~~or another adult who is over the age of twenty-one (21) years and related, whether by blood,~~  
7 ~~adoption or marriage, to the operator within the following degree of sanguinity: brother, sister,~~  
8 ~~grandfather, grandmother, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather,~~  
9 ~~stepmother, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, half sister, uncle, aunt, great uncle or great aunt~~  
10 ~~and, knowingly having liquor or intoxicating beverages in any form in containers, opened or~~  
11 ~~unopened, in any part of the vehicle shall be guilty of a criminal violation. The words liquor and~~  
12 ~~intoxicating beverages, as used in this section, have the same meaning as defined in chapter 1 of~~  
13 ~~this title. This section does not apply to persons between the ages of sixteen (16) and twenty-one~~  
14 ~~(21) who are transporting unopened alcoholic beverages in the course of their employment. No~~  
15 ~~person who is under the age of twenty-one (21) shall operate a motor vehicle upon the public~~  
16 ~~highways, while knowingly having liquor or intoxicating beverages in any form in containers,~~  
17 ~~opened or unopened, in any part of the vehicle, except when accompanied by a parent, legal~~  
18 ~~guardian, or another adult who is twenty-one (21) years of age or older and related, whether by~~  
19 ~~blood, adoption, or marriage, to the operator. The words "liquor" and "intoxicating beverages", as~~

1 used in this section, have the same meaning as defined in chapter 1 of this title. This section does  
2 not apply to persons between the ages of sixteen (16) and twenty-one (21) who are transporting  
3 unopened alcoholic beverages in the course of their employment.

4 (b) Any person who violates subsection (a) of this section shall be subject to the following:

5 (1) For a first offense, a fine of not more than two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) ~~and~~or have  
6 his or her license to operate a motor vehicle suspended for not more than thirty (30) days;

7 (2) For a second offense, a fine of not more than five hundred dollars (\$500) ~~and~~or have  
8 his or her license to operate a motor vehicle suspended for not more than ninety (90) days;

9 (3) For a third or subsequent offense, a fine of ~~no less~~ not more than five hundred dollars  
10 (\$500) ~~nor more than nine hundred and fifty dollars (\$950) and~~or have his or her license to operate  
11 a motor vehicle suspended for ~~one year~~ not more than six (6) months.

12 (c) The original jurisdiction for enforcement of this section shall be exclusively in the  
13 traffic tribunal.

14 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 make it unlawful for anyone under the age of 21 to operate a motor vehicle  
2   upon the public highways, while knowingly having liquor or intoxication beverages in any form in  
3   containers, opened or unopened, in any part of the vehicle, except when accompanied by a parent,  
4   legal guardian, or another adult who is 21 years of age or older and related, whether by blood,  
5   adoption, or marriage, to the operator.

6           This act would take effect upon passage.

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