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LC005451
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF
LICENSES -- VIOLATIONS

Introduced By: Senators Burke, Thompson, Famiglietti, Patalano, and Raptakis

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. Section 31-11-18.1 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-11 entitled
2 "Suspension or Revocation of Licenses — Violations" is hereby amended to read as follows:
3 **31-11-18.1. Driving after denial, revocation, or suspension for certain violations.**
4 (a) Any person shall be guilty of a misdemeanor for the first and second offenses and shall
5 be deemed guilty of a felony for the third or subsequent offenses who drives a motor vehicle on
6 any highway of this state who never applied for a license or who drives after his or her application
7 for a license has been refused, or after his or her license has expired or who otherwise drives without
8 a license or at a time when his or her license to operate is suspended, revoked, or cancelled, for:
9 (1) ~~operating~~ Operating under the influence of a narcotic drug or intoxicating liquor;
10 (2) ~~refusing~~ Refusing to submit to a chemical test; reckless driving;
11 (3) ~~manslaughter~~ Manslaughter from the operation of a motor vehicle or operating so as to
12 endanger resulting in death; ~~or~~
13 (4) ~~three~~ Three (3) moving violations within a one-year period;
14 (5) Lack of physical or mental fitness;
15 (6) Frequency of offenses pursuant to § 31-11-7(a)(1)(i); or
16 (7) Any court ordered license suspension. ~~shall be guilty of a misdemeanor for the first and~~
17 ~~second offenses and shall be deemed guilty of a felony for the third or subsequent offenses.~~
18 (b) The division of motor vehicles upon receiving a record of the conviction of any person

1 upon a charge of driving a motor vehicle while the license of the person was suspended, for reasons
2 set forth in this section shall suspend the person's license or deny the person's application for any
3 length of time that it shall deem proper but in no case less than an additional three (3) months. Upon
4 receiving a record of conviction of a second violation of driving a motor vehicle while the license
5 of that person was suspended for reasons set forth in this section, the division of motor vehicles
6 shall suspend the person's license or deny the person's application for any length of time that it
7 shall deem proper but in no case less than an additional six (6) months. Any subsequent conviction
8 shall result in license revocation. Upon receiving a record of the conviction of any person upon a
9 charge of driving after his or her application for a license had been refused, or after his or her license
10 had been revoked or cancelled for reasons set forth in this section, the division of motor vehicles
11 shall not issue a new license for an additional period of one year from and after the date the person
12 would otherwise have been entitled to apply for a new license.

13 (c)(1) Upon a first conviction under this section a mandatory fine of five hundred dollars
14 (\$500) shall be imposed, and if the person was driving after his or her application for a license had
15 been refused, or at a time when his or her license to operate was suspended, revoked, or cancelled
16 for operating under the influence of a controlled substance or intoxicating liquor, or his or her
17 refusal to submit to a chemical test, reckless driving, manslaughter from the operation of a motor
18 vehicle, or operation so as to endanger, death resulting, the person shall be imprisoned for a
19 minimum of ten (10) days.

20 (2) A mandatory fine of five hundred dollars (\$500) for a second conviction under this
21 section within a five (5) year period shall be imposed, and if the person was driving after his or her
22 application for a license had been refused, or at a time when his or her license to operate was
23 suspended, revoked, or cancelled for operating under the influence of a controlled substance or
24 intoxicating liquor or his or her refusal to submit to a chemical test, reckless driving, manslaughter
25 from the operation of a motor vehicle, or operation so as to endanger, death resulting, the person
26 shall be imprisoned for a minimum of six (6) months to one year.

27 (3) For any subsequent conviction within a five (5) year period, a fine of one thousand
28 dollars (\$1,000) shall be imposed and the person may be imprisoned for up to one year or be
29 required to participate in a public service program designated and approved by the court. If the
30 person was driving after his or her application for a license had been refused or at a time when his
31 or her license to operate was suspended, revoked, or cancelled for: (i) operating under the influence
32 of a controlled substance or intoxicating liquor; (ii) his or her refusal to submit to a chemical test;
33 (iii) reckless driving; (iv) manslaughter from the operation of a motor vehicle; or (v) operating so
34 as to endanger, death resulting; the person shall be imprisoned for a minimum of one year.

1 Jurisdiction for violations of this section is given to the district court and the court shall have full
2 authority to impose any sentence authorized for violations of this section.

3 (d) No fines, suspensions, treatment, or jail provided for under this section can be
4 suspended.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
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- 1 This act would add criminal penalties for operation of a motor vehicle after a suspension
2 for lack of physical or mental fitness, or as a result of frequency of offenses pursuant to § 31-11-7
3 (a)(1)(i) or as result of a court ordered suspension.
4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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