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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 COURTS AND CIVIL PROCEDURE -- PROCEDURE GENERALLY --  
CAUSES OF ACTION

Introduced By: Senator Brian J. Thompson

Date Introduced: March 04, 2026

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 9-1-18 of the General Laws in Chapter 9-1 entitled "Causes of  
2 Action" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **9-1-18. Effect of absence from state on limitations.**

4 [\(a\)](#) If any person against whom there is or shall be cause for any action, as enumerated in  
5 this chapter, in favor of a resident of the state, shall at the time the cause accrues be outside the  
6 limits of the state, or being within the state at the time the cause accrues shall go out of the state  
7 before the action is barred by the provisions of this chapter, and does not have or leave property or  
8 estate in the state that can be attached by process of law, then the person entitled to the action may  
9 commence the action, within the time before limited, after the person has returned into the state in  
10 such a manner that an action may, with reasonable diligence, be commenced against him or her by  
11 the person entitled to the action; provided, however, that no action shall be brought by any person  
12 upon a cause of action accruing outside this state which was barred by limitation or otherwise in  
13 the state, territory, or country in which the cause of action arose while he or she resided in the state.

14 [\(b\)\(1\) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, if any person or entity, including an](#)  
15 [individual or sole proprietor required to file under § 6-1-1, is required to register with the secretary](#)  
16 [of state under title 7 \("corporations, associations, and partnerships"\) or § 6-1-1 and fails to do so,](#)  
17 [the statute of limitations for any cause of action arising out of the business activities of that person](#)  
18 [or entity shall be tolled regardless of whether that person or entity maintains a physical presence in](#)

1 this state as defined in § 7-1.2-1401 (b), and shall not begin to run until the date the person or entity  
2 becomes duly registered or authorized to transact business in this state.

3 (2) Voluntary compliance incentive. If the person or entity becomes duly registered or  
4 authorized to transact business in this state before the earlier of:

5 (i) Receipt of written notice asserting a claim arising out of such business activities; or

6 (ii) Receipt of written notice from any state agency of a compliance inquiry or enforcement  
7 action relating to such registration obligation, then the applicable statute of limitations for any such  
8 cause of action shall begin to run on the date of such registration or authorization; provided,  
9 however, that any such action shall be commenced within three (3) years after the date of such  
10 registration or authorization, or within the otherwise applicable limitations period measured from  
11 the date the cause of action accrued, whichever is later.

12 (3) For purposes of this subsection:

13 (i) "Person" has the same meaning as provided in § 6-1-1.1 and includes a natural person  
14 acting as a sole proprietor who is required to file under § 6-1-1.

15 (ii) "Written notice" includes notice delivered by electronic mail.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
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RELATING TO COURTS AND CIVIL PROCEDURE -- PROCEDURE GENERALLY --  
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1           This act would toll the statute of limitations for causes of action arising out of business  
2 activities conducted in this state by a person or entity required to register with the secretary of state  
3 under title 7 ("corporations, associations, and partnerships") or § 6-1-1 but failing to do so, until  
4 such person or entity becomes duly registered or authorized to transact business in this state. This  
5 act would further provide a voluntary compliance incentive that starts the limitations period upon  
6 registration when the person or entity registers before written notice of a claim or enforcement  
7 inquiry, thereby encouraging compliance while preserving remedies for injured consumers and  
8 businesses.

9           This act would take effect upon passage.

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