

2026 -- S 3165

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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 -- REGISTRATION OF VEHICLES

Introduced By: Senators Ciccone, Britto, Burke, Thompson, Felag, and DiPalma

Date Introduced: March 27, 2026

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 31-3-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-3 entitled "Registration of  
2 Vehicles" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3           **31-3-5. Grounds for refusal of registration.**

4           The division of motor vehicles shall refuse registration or any transfer of registration upon  
5 any of the following grounds:

6           (1) That the application contains any false or fraudulent statement, or that the applicant has  
7 failed to furnish required information, or reasonable additional information requested by the  
8 division of motor vehicles, or that the applicant is not entitled to the issuance of registration of the  
9 vehicle under chapters 3 — 9 of this title;

10           (2) That the vehicle is mechanically unfit or unsafe to be operated upon the highways;

11           (3) That the division of motor vehicles has reasonable ground to believe that the vehicle is  
12 a stolen or embezzled vehicle, or that the granting of registration would constitute a fraud against  
13 the rightful owner;

14           (4) That the registration of the vehicle stands suspended or revoked for any reason as  
15 provided in the motor vehicle laws of this state;

16           (5) That the vehicle has been reported by any ~~city or town~~ city, town, state and/or agency  
17 of a municipality or state to the division of motor vehicles as having unpaid fines in the aggregate  
18 amount of two hundred dollars (\$200) or more, including any and all interest, penalties, or other  
19 monetary amount that may be imposed for failure to pay the fines by a specified date; provided, the

1 registration shall be issued upon presentation of proof of payment of the outstanding fines,  
2 including any and all interest, penalties, or other monetary amount owed to the cities or towns  
3 reporting the unpaid fines. When the division of motor vehicles denies a registration to any person  
4 pursuant to this subsection, the city, ~~or town~~ or state agency requesting the denial of registration  
5 shall add a five-dollar (\$5.00) fee to the aggregate value of the sum of the fines and, upon payment,  
6 shall transmit the fee to the division of motor vehicles. The provisions of this subsection shall not  
7 apply to any vehicle owned by a rental company, as defined in § 31-34.1-1;

8 (6) That the vehicle does not comply with regulations promulgated pursuant to § 23-23-  
9 5(18);

10 (7) That the vehicle does not comply with the provisions of chapter 47.1 of this title and  
11 any rules and regulations promulgated under that chapter;

12 (8) That a commercial motor vehicle is being operated by a commercial motor carrier that  
13 has been prohibited from operating in interstate commerce by a federal agency with authority to do  
14 so under federal law;

15 (9) That the registered owner of a vehicle failed to pay the required toll amounts,  
16 administrative fees, and fines as prescribed in § 24-12-37; or

17 (10) That the vehicle is a “Kei car” or “Kei truck”. Provided, however, that the registrant  
18 of any “Kei car” or “Kei truck” which was validly registered prior to June 1, 2024, shall not be  
19 denied renewal of that registration based solely on the vehicle type; and further, provided that, any  
20 such registrations shall not be permitted to be transferred. Every person lawfully operating a “Kei  
21 car” or “Kei truck” shall have the right to use the public highways in the state including any state  
22 highway, through highway, limited-access highway or public highway or roadway with a posted  
23 speed limit of thirty-five miles per hour (35 m.p.h.) or less. Nothing in this subsection, however,  
24 shall be construed to prohibit a “Kei car” or “Kei truck” from crossing a public highway at an  
25 intersection where the public highway to be crossed has a posted speed limit between thirty-five  
26 miles per hour (35 m.p.h.) and forty-five miles per hour (45 m.p.h.); provided the public highway  
27 the “Kei car” or “Kei truck” is traveling on and the public highway the “Kei car” or “Kei truck” is  
28 crossing the intersection toward both have a speed limit no higher than thirty-five miles per hour  
29 (35 m.p.h.) and the intersection is controlled by traffic signals or stop signs.

30 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 allow any city, town, state and/or agency of a municipality or the state to  
2 report unpaid fines of two hundred dollars (\$200) or more to the division of motor vehicles as  
3 grounds for refusal of registration.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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