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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 HEALTH AND SAFETY -- RIGHTS OF NURSING HOME PATIENTS

Introduced By: Senators Dimitri, LaMountain, Famiglietti, Patalano, and Thompson

Date Introduced: April 03, 2026

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 23-17.5-21 of the General Laws in Chapter 23-17.5 entitled "Rights
2 of Nursing Home Patients" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **23-17.5-21. Penalties. Penalties -- Civil violation.**

4 (a) Any nursing home which refuses or neglects to post provisions or which violates the
5 requirements of this chapter shall be guilty of a misdemeanor for each violation punishable by a
6 fine of up to five hundred dollars (\$500) and/or six (6) months in jail.

7 (b) Any person, including any estate, shall have a cause of action, independent and in
8 addition to any other legal remedy available, against any nursing home in violation of this chapter.
9 This cause of action to recover actual and punitive damages shall be brought in a court of competent
10 jurisdiction, and any plaintiff who prevails in such action shall be entitled to recover reasonable
11 attorneys' fees and costs of any action.

12 (c) The department of health may maintain an action in the name of the state to enforce the
13 provisions of this chapter and any rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to this chapter.

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

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- RIGHTS OF NURSING HOME PATIENTS

- 1 This act would provide a specific cause of action for violations of the rights of nursing
- 2 home patients chapter.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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