

2019 -- H 5975

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LC002320  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

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A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- ACCIDENTS AND ACCIDENT  
REPORTS

Introduced By: Representatives Noret, Serpa, Jackson, Casimiro, and Vella-Wilkinson

Date Introduced: April 10, 2019

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 31-26-1 of the General Laws in Chapter 31-26 entitled "Accidents  
2 and Accident Reports" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3           **31-26-1. Duty to stop in accidents resulting in personal injury.**

4           (a) The driver of any vehicle knowingly involved in an accident resulting in injury to,  
5 serious bodily injury to, or death of any person shall immediately stop the vehicle at the scene of  
6 the accident or as close to it as possible, but shall then immediately return to and in every event  
7 shall remain at the scene of the accident until he or she has fulfilled the requirements of § 31-26-  
8 3. A stop shall be made without obstructing traffic more than is necessary.

9           (b) Any person knowingly failing to stop or to comply with the requirements under  
10 circumstances which result in injury to any person shall upon conviction be punished by a  
11 mandatory loss of license for at least one year and not more than five (5) years and imprisonment  
12 for not more than five (5) years and/or fined up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000).

13           (c)(1) Any person knowingly failing to stop or to comply with the requirements under  
14 circumstances which result in serious bodily injury to any person shall upon conviction be  
15 punished as follows:

16           (i) Every person convicted of a first violation shall be punished by imprisonment for not  
17 less than one year and for not more than ten (10) years and by a fine of not less than one thousand  
18 dollars (\$1,000), nor more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000). The sentencing judge shall have

1 the discretion to sentence the person to any unit of the adult correctional institutions.  
2 Additionally, the license of the person shall be revoked for a period of up to two (2) years. The  
3 license privilege shall not be reinstated until evidence satisfactory to the administrator of the  
4 division of motor vehicles establishes that no grounds exist which would authorize refusal to  
5 issue a license and until the person gives proof of financial responsibility pursuant to chapter 32  
6 of this title.

7 (ii) For a second or subsequent conviction under this subsection within a five (5) year  
8 period, a person shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than two (2) years nor more than  
9 fifteen (15) years and by a fine of not less than three thousand dollars (\$3,000) nor more than ten  
10 thousand dollars (\$10,000). The sentencing judge shall have the discretion to sentence the person  
11 to any unit of the adult correctional institutions. Additionally, the license of the person shall be  
12 revoked for a period of up to four (4) years. The license privilege shall not be reinstated until  
13 evidence satisfactory to the administrator of the division of motor vehicles establishes that no  
14 grounds exist which would authorize refusal to issue a license and until the person gives proof of  
15 financial responsibility pursuant to chapter 32 of this title.

16 (2) As used in this subsection, "serious bodily injury" means physical injury that creates a  
17 substantial risk of death or causes serious physical disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment  
18 of the function of any bodily member or organ.

19 (d) Any person knowingly failing to stop or to comply with the requirements under  
20 circumstances which result in the death of any person, shall upon conviction be punished  
21 pursuant to the provisions of this subsection as follows:

22 (1) Every person convicted of a first violation of this subsection shall be punished by  
23 imprisonment in the state prison for not less than ~~two (2)~~ five (5) years and for not more than  
24 fifteen (15) years, in any unit of the adult correctional institutions in the discretion of the  
25 sentencing judge, by a fine of not less than ~~five thousand dollars (\$5,000)~~ ten thousand dollars  
26 (\$10,000) nor more than ~~ten thousand dollars (\$10,000)~~ twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000), and  
27 his or her license to operate a motor vehicle shall be revoked for a period of ~~three (3)~~ five (5)  
28 years. The license privilege shall not be reinstated until evidence satisfactory to the administrator  
29 of the division of motor vehicles establishes that no grounds exist which would authorize the  
30 refusal to issue a license, and until the person gives proof of financial responsibility pursuant to  
31 chapter 32 of this title.

32 (2) Every person convicted of a second or subsequent violation of this subsection within a  
33 five (5) year period shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for not less than five (5)  
34 years and for not more than twenty (20) years, in any unit of the adult correctional institutions in

1 the discretion of the sentencing judge, by a fine of not less than ten thousand dollars (\$10,000)  
2 nor more than twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) and his or her license to operate a motor vehicle  
3 shall be revoked for a period of five (5) years. The license privilege shall not be reinstated until  
4 evidence satisfactory to the administrator of the division of motor vehicles establishes that no  
5 grounds exist which would authorize the refusal to issue a license, and until the person gives  
6 proof of financial responsibility pursuant to chapter 32 of this title.

7 (e) This section shall apply in its entirety to any driver of a motor vehicle knowingly  
8 involved in an accident with a person riding a bicycle.

9 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 increase the penalties for a first offense of leaving the scene of an accident  
2 resulting in death to a minimum five (5) years in incarceration, a minimum of ten thousand  
3 dollars (\$10,000) and a minimum license revocation of five (5) years.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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