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LC003422

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**S T A T E   O F   R H O D E   I S L A N D**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026**

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**A N   A C T**

**RELATING TO HIGHWAYS -- CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF STATE ROADS**

Introduced By: Senators Vargas, Urso, DiMario, Bell, Valverde, Britto, Murray, and Thompson

Date Introduced: January 30, 2026

Referred To: Senate Housing & Municipal Government

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1        SECTION 1. Section 24-8-11 of the General Laws in Chapter 24-8 entitled "Construction  
2        and Maintenance of State Roads" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3        **24-8-11. Beautification.**

4        (a) The department of transportation is hereby authorized and empowered to plant trees,  
5        shrubs, forbs, and grasses and otherwise beautify the area within the limits of a road, including state  
6        highways in a manner and at locations as the department may deem advisable. Plantings shall  
7        include pollinator-friendly native species when appropriate and the cost of the work shall be paid  
8        from moneys, appropriated for highway purposes, not otherwise needed for the construction,  
9        reconstruction and maintenance of state roads and bridges; and the state controller is hereby  
10      authorized and directed to draw his or her orders upon the general treasurer for the payment of such  
11      sums as may from time to time be required, upon receipt by him or her of proper vouchers approved  
12      by the director of transportation. The department shall seek suggestions from apiarists,  
13      horticulturists and other certified professionals to identify the appropriate types of plants and  
14      locations that benefits pollinators. For purposes of this section "pollinators" means insects to  
15      include, but not limited to, bees that help carry pollen from the male part of the flower to the female  
16      part of the same or another flower.

17        (b) Any and all activities performed by the department of transportation to benefit  
18        pollinators on roadsides and state highways shall be consistent with the best practices required in §

1      [23 U.S.C. 332.](#)

2            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 HIGHWAYS -- CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF STATE  
ROADS

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- 1        This act would authorize and empower the department of transportation to plant pollinator
- 2        friendly native species of trees, shrubs, grasses and plants within limits of a roadway, including
- 3        state highways.
- 4        The department would follow guidelines to benefit pollinators consistent with § 23
- 5        U.S.C.332.
- 6        This act would take effect upon passage.

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