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**COMMENTS ON 14-S 2187, RELATING TO LITTER CONTROL**  
**April 2, 2014**

Presently, fines that are collected for littering offenses are deposited in the state's general fund. This bill would instead provide that 30% of those fines go to the police department that issued the citation. The ACLU of Rhode Island opposes this legislation, despite its good intentions.

The ACLU has long been concerned about penalty schemes that directly reward police departments financially in this way. It can create a "bounty" mentality and skew law enforcement priorities in an inappropriate manner. A police department's decision as to what laws to enforce and how vigorously to enforce them should never be based on financial incentives, yet that is precisely what bills like this can encourage, consciously or not.

In short, when a police officer issues someone a ticket for littering, no one should have to wonder whether it was issued, to the detriment of other law enforcement priorities, because the officer knew it would financially benefit his police department. We therefore oppose this bill.