



128 Dorrance Street, Suite 400
Providence, RI 02903
Phone: (401) 831-7171
Fax: (401) 831-7175
www.riaclu.org
info@riaclu.org

ACLU OF RI POSITION: OPPOSE

**TESTIMONY ON 25-S 214,
RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES – SUSPENSION OR
RECOVATION OF LICENSES
May 8, 2025**

The ACLU of Rhode Island opposes this bill which would “impound” or confiscate the license plates of a car if the driver’s license of the motorist had been suspended, revoked or cancelled for a variety of offenses. Though we recognize that the legislation includes a potential exception for “undue hardship,” this proposal is still overly punitive and could have damaging effects on both the individual and those who depend on them, including during any potential rehabilitative process.

Especially today, consistent and ready access to a motor vehicle is necessary to go to work, school, the doctor, or to engage in a multitude of other critical and important tasks. Considering the role that employment, financial, and housing stability have on the ability for an individual to engage with the rehabilitative process, removing access to a car could have enormously harmful effects.

This overly severe penalty additionally threatens the stability of entire families. Suspending an individual’s driver’s license is already a significant punishment; removing mobility for possibly an entire family could impact the finances and well-being of an entire household. While this legislation offers a “hardship exemption,” it is purely discretionary even if an undue hardship is found.

Ultimately, because this legislation is unnecessarily punitive and could have a reverberating impact beyond the punishment of the sole offender, we urge its rejection.

Thank you for your consideration.