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February 28, 2024

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan
Chair, House Health and Human Services Committee
Rhode Island State House
Providence, RI 02903

IN SUPPORT OF H-7040 – RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES – OPERATORS' AND CHAUFFEURS' LICENSES BLUE ENVELOPE BILL

Dear Chairperson Donovan,

On behalf of the Rhode Island Police Chief's Association (RIPCA) I am writing to express our support for the bill referenced above, which will require the administrator of the division of motor vehicles (DMV), in consultation with the (RIPCA) and an organization that advocates for persons with autism spectrum disorder, to design and make available for persons with autism the following; a motor vehicle license operator's license that is clearly marked "autism", decals that are clearly marked "autism" and blue envelopes that provide written information regarding ways to enhance communication between a police officer and a person with autism.

This bill will improve communication with drivers who are autistic and help police identify them during traffic stops. This will greatly reduce the chance of misunderstandings and negative interactions between police and people with autism. This bill will also provide the participants and their loved ones with the peace of mind that they can take proactive steps to improve overall interactions with law enforcement.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this written testimony on behalf of the RIPCA and as always, I am available for any follow-up questions you or the committee may have.

Respectfully Submitted,

Colonel Bradford E. Connor,
President, Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association
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