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ACLU OF RI POSITION: SUPPORT

TESTIMONY ON 25-H 5301, AN ACT RELATING TO IDENTITY THEFT PROTECTION ACT OF 2015 February 11, 2025

The large data breach at the RI Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) that came to light in 2021 and compromised the Social Security numbers and private health care information of thousands of individuals who had no apparent connection to the agency demonstrated the acute need for strengthening the state's cybersecurity breach laws. The even more enormous RIBridges data breach has only added to the urgency of acting. Because this legislation would serve that goal, we strongly support it and urge its passage.

Learning from the mistakes that were uncovered due to the RIPTA breach, this bill would, among other things, reduce the time for agencies to provide notice to authorities and affected individuals about breaches; ensure that, where applicable, labor unions would be notified of breaches affecting their members; and extend the time for remediation services to be provided people whose information may have been disclosed.

All of these changes are modest and reasonable, but absolutely necessary. Timely notice and appropriate remediation are critical to protect individuals from potential fraud emanating from these breaches. The ACLU of Rhode Island therefore strongly supports this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.