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**Statement by AAA Northeast  
Before The House State Government & Elections Committee  
February 29, 2024**

My name is Mary Maguire, and as Vice President of Public/Government Affairs, I am writing to provide testimony on behalf of AAA Northeast, serving almost 530,000 members in Rhode Island.

AAA Northeast strongly supports the passage of H 7470. In our opinion, this legislation will improve the state's current load covering law by requiring that coverings remain in place and secured during travel on any highway.

Road debris presents serious traffic safety concerns. According to a 2016 research study conducted by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, road debris is a factor in thousands of police reported crashes every year. Key findings of that study include:

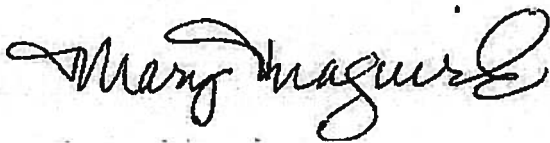
- Between 2011-2014, road debris was a factor in a total of more than 200,000 police-reported crashes resulting in a total of approximately 39,000 injuries and 500 deaths.
- Compared to crashes that did not involve debris, debris-related crashes were approximately four times as likely to occur on interstate highways.
- Nearly 37 percent of all deaths in road debris crashes resulted from the driver swerving to avoid hitting an object.
- About two-thirds of debris-related crashes are the result of items falling from a vehicle due to improper maintenance and unsecured loads. The most common types of vehicle debris are:
  - Parts becoming detached from a vehicle (tires, wheels, etc.) and falling onto the roadway
  - Unsecured cargo like furniture, appliances and other items falling onto the roadway
  - Tow trailers becoming separated and hitting another vehicle or landing on the roadway

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- More than one in three crashes involving debris occur between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm, a time when many people are on the road hauling or moving heavy items like furniture, landscaping material, or construction equipment.

In our view, enactment of this legislation will decrease the chances of drivers being involved in road debris crashes by improving the State's current road debris law.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Maguire". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "M".

Mary Maguire  
Vice President, Public & Government Affairs  
AAA Northeast

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