

2012 -- H 7600

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012

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A N A C T

RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- NEXT-OF-KIN ACCIDENT  
IDENTIFICATION

Introduced By: Representatives Baldelli-Hunt, Johnston, Jacquard, E Coderre, and Hull

Date Introduced: February 16, 2012

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Chapter 31-10 of the General Laws entitled "Operators' and Chauffeurs'  
2 Licenses" is hereby amended by adding thereto the following sections:

3           **31-10-33.1. Next-of-kin identification registry program.** – (a) By January 1, 2014, the  
4 administrator of the Rhode Island division of motor vehicles shall develop and implement an  
5 Internet next-of-kin registry program. Under the program, the holder of any Rhode Island driver's  
6 license or non-driver identification card shall have the opportunity to voluntarily submit, via the  
7 Internet, the name and telephone number of three (3) emergency contacts to the division of motor  
8 vehicles.

9           (b) In implementing this program, the administrator shall establish a process whereby the  
10 holder of any driver's license or non-driver identification card may electronically sign onto the  
11 division of motor vehicles' website using his or her driver's license number or non-driver  
12 identification card number. The licensee or cardholder may then submit the name and telephone  
13 number of up to three (3) emergency contacts to the division of motor vehicles' official website.  
14 A licensee or cardholder who submits the name and telephone number of an emergency contact  
15 shall have the opportunity to revise or update the emergency contact information at any time.

16           (c) Once implemented, the administrator shall be responsible for establishing and  
17 maintaining a standardized and automated statewide registry capable of storing and distributing  
18 emergency contact information to law enforcement officials. The administrator shall strive to

1 ensure that the information contained in the Internet registry is updated as appropriate in a timely  
2 and efficient manner.

3 (d) Information in the registry shall be accessible only by law enforcement officials and  
4 employees of the division of motor vehicles that are designated by the administrator. Any  
5 emergency contact information submitted to the division of motor vehicles shall not be  
6 considered a public record pursuant to chapter 38-2-1 et seq.

7 (e) For the purposes of this section, “emergency contact person” or “emergency contact”  
8 means a person, eighteen (18) years of age or older, who the holder of any Rhode Island driver's  
9 license or non-driver identification card designated to be contacted by law enforcement personnel  
10 when the licensee or card holder is rendered unable to communicate due to a motor vehicle  
11 accident resulting in the serious bodily injury, death, or incapacitation of the licensee or card  
12 holder. An “emergency contact person” or “emergency contact” may or may not be the next-of-  
13 kin of the licensee or cardholder; except that if the licensee or cardholder is under the age of  
14 eighteen (18) and is not emancipated, the emergency contact person shall be the parent or  
15 guardian of that licensee or cardholder.

16 **31-10-33.2. Emergency contact information.** – When a motor vehicle accident results  
17 in the serious bodily injury, death, or incapacitation of a driver or any passenger, the law  
18 enforcement officer investigating the motor vehicle accident shall attempt to locate an emergency  
19 contact person by accessing the emergency contact database established pursuant to section 31-  
20 10-33.1. That law enforcement officer shall, when practicable, expeditiously notify the  
21 emergency contact of any person involved in the motor vehicle accident and inform the  
22 emergency contact of the hospital or other location at which the driver or passenger may be  
23 receiving medical treatment.

24 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage and shall be implemented no later  
25 than January 1, 2013.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF

A N A C T  
RELATING TO MOTOR AND OTHER VEHICLES -- NEXT-OF-KIN ACCIDENT  
IDENTIFICATION

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1           This act would establish a “next-of-kin” program with the state division of motor vehicles  
2 which allows any holder of a Rhode Island driver’s license or working identification card to  
3 voluntary submit, via Internet, the name and telephone number of up to three (3) of his or her  
4 emergency contact persons to the division of motor vehicles. It would provide access to this  
5 information to law enforcement officials, especially when a motor vehicle accident results in the  
6 serious bodily injury, death, or incapacitation of a driver or passenger.

7           This act would take effect upon passage and would be implemented no later than January  
8 1, 2013.

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