

SENATE, No. 4673

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
222nd LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED OCTOBER 1, 2026

Sponsored by:
Senator PATRICK J. DIEGNAN, JR.
District 18 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Increases property damage threshold for driver to report motor vehicle accident to law enforcement.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning reporting requirements for drivers involved in
2 motor vehicle accidents and amending R.S.39:4-130.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. R.S.39:4-130 is amended to read as follows:

8 39:4-130. The driver of a vehicle or street car involved in an
9 accident resulting in injury to or death of any person, or damage to
10 property of any one person in excess of **[\$500.00]** \$1,000 shall by
11 the quickest means of communication give notice of **[such]** the
12 accident to the local police department or to the nearest office of the
13 county police of the county or of the State Police, and in addition
14 shall within 10 days after **[such]** the accident forward a written
15 report of **[such]** the accident to the commission on forms furnished
16 by it. **[Such]** The written reports shall contain sufficiently detailed
17 information with reference to a motor vehicle accident, including
18 the cause, the conditions then existing, the persons and vehicles
19 involved and such information as may be necessary to enable the
20 chief administrator to determine whether the requirements for the
21 deposit of security required by law are inapplicable by reason of the
22 existence of insurance or other circumstances. The chief
23 administrator may rely upon the accuracy of the information
24 contained in any **[such]** report, unless **[he]** the chief administrator
25 has reason to believe that the report is erroneous. The commission
26 may require operators involved in accidents to file supplemental
27 reports of accidents upon forms furnished by it when in the opinion
28 of the commission, the original report is insufficient. The reports
29 shall be without prejudice, shall be for the information of the
30 commission, and shall not be open to public inspection. The fact
31 that the reports have been so made shall be admissible in evidence
32 solely to prove **[a]** compliance with this section, but no report or
33 any part thereof or statement contained therein shall be admissible
34 in evidence for any other purpose in any proceeding or action
35 arising out of the accident.

36 Whenever the driver of a vehicle is physically incapable of
37 giving immediate notice or making a written report of an accident
38 as required in this section, and there was another occupant in the
39 vehicle at the time of the accident capable of giving notice or
40 making a report, **[such]** the occupant shall make or cause to be
41 made **[said]** any notice or report not made by the driver.

42 Whenever the driver is physically incapable of making a written
43 report of an accident as required by this section and **[such driver]** is
44 not the owner of the vehicle, then the owner of the vehicle involved

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is
not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 in **【such】** the accident shall make **【such】** any report not made by
2 the driver.

3 In those cases where a driver knowingly violates the provisions
4 of this section by failing to make a written report of an accident,
5 there shall be a permissive inference that the registered owner of the
6 vehicle which was involved in that accident was the person
7 involved in the accident; provided, however, if that vehicle is
8 owned by a rental car company or is a leased vehicle, there shall be
9 a permissive inference that the renter or authorized driver pursuant
10 to a rental car contract or the lessee, and not the owner of the
11 vehicle, was the person involved in the accident, and the
12 requirements and penalties imposed pursuant to this section shall be
13 applicable to that renter or authorized driver or lessee and not the
14 owner of the vehicle.

15 Any person who suppresses, by way of concealment or
16 destruction, any evidence of a violation of this section or who
17 suppresses the identity of the violator shall be subject to a fine of
18 not less than \$250 or more than \$1,000.

19 A written report of an accident shall not be required by this
20 section if a law enforcement officer submits a written report of the
21 accident to the commission pursuant to R.S.39:4-131.

22 Except as otherwise provided in this section, a person who
23 knowingly violates this section shall be fined not less than \$30 or
24 more than \$100.

25 The chief administrator may revoke or suspend the operator's
26 license privilege and registration privilege of a person who violates
27 this section.

28 For purposes of this section, it shall not be a defense that the
29 operator of the motor vehicle was unaware of the existence or
30 extent of personal injury or property damage caused by the accident
31 as long as the operator was aware that he was involved in an
32 accident.

33 (cf: P.L.2007, c.266, s.2)

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35 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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40 This bill increases the property damage threshold for reportable
41 motor vehicle accidents.

42 Under current law, the driver of a motor vehicle involved in an
43 accident that results in property damage exceeding \$500 is required
44 to promptly notify the local police department or the nearest office
45 of the county police or the State Police and forward a written report
46 of the accident to the Motor Vehicle Commission within 10 days.

S4673 DIEGNAN

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1 This bill increases the property damage threshold for reportable
2 motor vehicle accidents from \$500 to \$1,000. The amount was last
3 increased in 1983 from \$200 to \$500.

4 According to the sponsor, the significant increase in motor
5 vehicle repair costs means the current reporting threshold no longer
6 reflects the cost of repairing even minor damage. In many cases, the
7 cost to repair a simple scratch now exceeds \$500. The sponsor
8 intends for this bill to modernize the reporting threshold to reflect
9 current economic conditions, reduce the number of minor accidents
10 that have become reportable solely because of inflation in repair
11 costs, and lessen the long-term insurance consequences for drivers
12 involved in minor accidents, while maintaining appropriate
13 reporting requirements for more significant collisions.