

## Lou Mansolillo

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**From:** barry schiller <bschillert358@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 7, 2026 8:08 AM  
**To:** House Corporations Committee  
**Cc:** Amy Joy Glidden  
**Subject:** support for H8127 from RI Transit Riders

Dear House Corporations Committee

This is Barry Schiller, writing for RI Transit Riders in support of bill H8127 that makes some changes in the composition of the Board of Directors of the Rhode Island Transit Authority.

We support the bill's change in how the Board Chair is selected, going back to being by the membership as it had been until a few years ago when it was changed to being ex-officio the Director of the RI Department of Transportation. We do agree it is useful to continue to have the RIDOT Director as a member of the Board to facilitate coordination, most RIPTA routes use state highways, and RIDOT is responsible for overseeing railroad issues in the state including Amtrak and MBTA commuter rail servicers. But RIPTA needs its own spokesperson, which is often the Board Chair. Being RIDOT Director is already a very time consuming job, not all of them have any background in transit, and there could be a conflict of interest between the agencies as recently happened with regard to a bill changing the gas tax allocation. It is best that the Board Chair speak for RIPTA in such matters.

The bill also raises the RIPTA Board membership from 9 to 10, we advise leaving it at 9 to reduce the chances of a tie vote. We also note the addition of the "Rhode Island Climate Community" to the list of groups that the Governor should give "due attention to their recommendations" in making Board appointments. With the important role RIPTA could play in addressing climate change, we appreciate this intent, but there is no actual group with that name. We suggest instead it be the Environment Council of Rhode Island as that is the organization that coordinates the several climate activist groups. Finally we note that one of the groups listed is the "RIPTA Riders Alliance," we suggest changing that to ""Rhode Island Transit Riders" as we changed our name to that in November 2020 to avoid some confusion with people thinking we were part of RIPTA..

Thank you for considering our views

Barry Schiller  
for RI Transit Riders  
cc Amy Glidden, RITR Chair