

## Lou Mansolillo

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**From:** will masse <willmasse@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 7, 2026 9:49 AM  
**To:** House Corporations Committee  
**Cc:** Sen. LaMountain, Matthew L.; Rep. McNamara, Joseph M.  
**Subject:** SUPPORT (8127) - RIPTA Board Reform

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Dear Chair Solomon and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is William Masse, I live in Warwick, Rhode Island, and I am writing in support of Bill H8127.

Public transit is essential to my daily life. I rely on RIPTA to get to work most days, using Route 4, and the recent service cuts have made my commute significantly more difficult. With buses running less frequently, I spend more time waiting and have less flexibility in my schedule. It has made getting to work more stressful and less reliable, and it shows how important it is that RIPTA is governed in a way that truly prioritizes riders.

For decades, Rhode Island maintained a clear division between RIDOT and RIPTA, with each agency focused on its own mission. That separation was undone in 2023 when the RIDOT Director was made Chair of the RIPTA Board. While the goal may have been better coordination, in practice it created a conflict of interest, since both agencies compete for the same funding sources.

We have already seen the consequences of this structure. The only public opposition to increasing RIPTA funding last year came from the RIDOT Director—who, as Chair of the RIPTA Board, was also responsible for the health of the transit system. During that same period, RIPTA underwent the most severe service cuts in its history, highlighting how this conflict of interest can manifest into real consequences for everyday working class Rhode Islanders.

As someone directly affected by these service cuts, it is frustrating to see decisions impacting my daily commute being made under a system that does not fully prioritize transit riders. We need a governance model where RIPTA can advocate for itself and where riders have a real voice in decision-making.

H8127 would restore balance by ensuring that RIDOT has a seat at the table without controlling the Board, and by strengthening representation from riders and community stakeholders. That kind of structure would lead to better decision-making and a more reliable transit system for people like me.

At a time when Rhode Island is facing rising fuel costs and working toward its Act on Climate goals, we should be strengthening public transit, not weakening its governance.

I urge you to support H8127 to ensure that RIPTA has the independence and leadership it needs to provide reliable, accessible service to Rhode Islanders.

Sincerely,  
William Masse  
Warwick, Rhode Island

