



5/20/2025

Dear Chair Abney and the Finance Committee.

Public transit has gained recognition from prominent organizations like the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the American Public Health Association (APHA), and the Union of Concerned Scientists as a crucial means to combat climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and various air pollutants associated with respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses.

The current funding mechanism in our state, primarily reliant on the gas tax, is deemed insufficient to support and enhance public transit systems.

The significance of robust public transit cannot be overstated in addressing climate risks and chronic diseases. Social determinants profoundly influence individual and family health, with land-use policies favoring private vehicles contributing to urban sprawl, exacerbating greenhouse gas emissions, and isolating marginalized communities such as the elderly and youth who depend on public transportation.

In Rhode Island, a substantial proportion of households, particularly in Providence, rely solely on public transit, highlighting the critical role it plays in ensuring equitable access to employment opportunities and reducing transportation costs for low-wage families. Many families are a one car household – in part to save money and for the environmental impacts.



As we have seen with the Washington Bridge, our roads are in severe disarray, and we need to be minimizing the number of cars that are on the road to avoid another issue.

RIPTA is a vital part of our community, many people who are disabled or who are blind are able to utilize RIPTA to carry on normal lives. Not to mention the severe loss of jobs if we were to cut routes or downsize. RI being so small we can do more than other states and be a leader in public transportation.

Clean Water Action is in strong support H6020.

Thank you,

Emily Howe, State Director of Clean Water Action, RI