

Dear Chair Abney and honorable members of the House Finance Committee,

My name is Cedric Ye, and I am a high school student who lives in Providence. **I am writing in strong support of Rep. Morales' H5405**, which reallocates the Rideshare sales tax to RIPTA.

I use RIPTA every day, but I have many friends who live in places inaccessible by public transit, and they often use Uber as the only way to get home. As I walk to the bus stop, I often see them in the lobby waiting for a ride, paying upwards of \$30 every single afternoon because they do not have another alternative. This would become the reality for thousands of Rhode Islanders if RIPTA went over the fiscal cliff; RIPTA projected the potential elimination of all service on Sundays and complete elimination of fixed route and paratransit service to nine entire municipalities. 55% of RIPTA riders make under \$15,000, and simply don't have the financial means to afford such expensive transportation. At the service cuts hearings last year, hundreds of individuals discussed how they would lose their job if their bus route were to be cut.

It is well-researched that the rising popularity of Uber and Lyft are detrimental to public transit service. A [University of Kentucky](#) study found that these app-based taxis caused transit ridership to crater nationwide, causing declines of as much as 12.7% and steep losses in fare revenue. It shouldn't be surprising that RIPTA is no exception to this trend; one of the most chronically underfunded transit agencies in the region can't compete with all the venture capital of Silicon Valley. **It is only fair for Uber and Lyft to pay for the damage they do to public transit**, and reallocating the sales tax is common-sense legislation that wouldn't even require riders to pay a single extra cent.

I urge you to please pass H5405. Rhode Island's future depends on finding real, sustainable funding solutions for RIPTA to preserve and expand service across the state. Reallocating the Uber/Lyft sales tax is a common-sense measure that would help stabilize a lifeline for over 30,000 Rhode Islanders while strengthening our economic potential and creating a more resilient future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Cedric Ye
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