



Environment Council of Rhode Island

Re: Environment Council of Rhode Island supports H - 5405

From Peter Trafton of Providence, Testimony supporting H - 5405

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Environment Council of Rhode Island, I write with strong support for House Bill 5405 by Rep Morales and colleagues.

ECRI recognizes the many environmental benefits provided by public mass transportation as an alternative to individual car travel. Thus, we prioritize adequate funding and efficient management for RIPTA so that our state will benefit from greenhouse gas reduction, improved air quality, reduced energy consumption for travel, reduced traffic congestion, and promotion of smart growth and sustainable development.

Because RIPTA offers so many benefits, ECRI chose the Save RIPTA Package of 7 bills as one of our top four priorities for 2025. Rep. Morales' H5405 is part of that package.

The bill directs that the current rideshare tax be used entirely for support of RIPTA. This is fair since rideshare corporations reduce public transit use while increasing vehicle congestion and GHG emissions. They are not a sustainable replacement for public transit and they increase costs for lower income travelers.

ECRI urges you to help direct additional funding streams to RIPTA to help it become financially stable and able to expand to provide the service Rhode Island needs.
Please pass H - 5405.

Thanks very much for considering our comments.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "PG Trafton".

Peter Trafton, MD
Co-VP of Policy, Environment Council of Rhode Island