

Dear Chairman Abney and Committee members,

My name is Veronicka Vega, I live in Woonsocket, and I am here/writing in support of Representative Morales' H5405. This act would allocate the current rideshare tax to fund RIPTA and ensure another sustainable funding stream in the future.

Before COVID, I used RIPTA 54 bus to commute from Woonsocket to JWU's campus downtown 4-5 days a week. I purchased a bus pass through my school and was able to ride RIPTA unlimited for around \$100 a month I believe - it was great as a young college student without a vehicle.

After COVID, I used RIPTA's 87 bus to get around Woonsocket to get to work, doctor appointments, the laundromat, grocery shopping, etc. I found rideshare services to be too expensive compared to RIPTA. Rideshare services are great for emergencies, but can be costly for frequent use. There are surcharges and priority pricing, subscriptions, and other tedious extra costs- all of which RIPTA doesn't have.

I urge you to support this legislation so we can have a reliable public transportation system for years to come. If we have a robust and adequately funded public transportation department, we can compete with those private companies and provide an equally great service for a better price, that's better for the environment.

As a transit rider and supporter, I am relying on you to support this simple solution for increasing revenue for RIPTA by diverting sales tax from rides taken on Uber and Lyft, modes that are actively hurting public transit. Securing new and diverse funding streams that do not rely on the federal government or declining gas tax revenue will not only achieve financial stability, but allow for the expansion of service to meet the needs of a growing population that requires access to the affordable and sustainable travel option that public transit provides.

I urge you to support H5405, to give public transit the funding it needs to expand service, attract new riders, and get working people where they need to go, affordably and safely.

Sincerely,

Veronicka Vega
85 W Park Pl, Woonsocket