



Environment Council of Rhode Island

Re: Environment Council of Rhode Island supports H - 5467

From Peter Trafton of Providence, Testimony supporting H – 5467

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Environment Council of Rhode Island, I write with strong support for House Bill 5467 by Rep. Stewart and colleagues.

ECRI recognizes the many environmental benefits provided by public mass transportation instead of 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. Stewart's H 5467 is part of that package.**

RIPTA receives about \$40 million annually from gasoline tax revenues. When this practice began, its share was 30%, but it has not been increased to maintain the 30% rate. The purpose of H5467 is to raise RIPTA's share of the gasoline tax to 30% for 2026 and thereafter. This would increase the current share to an additional \$7 million a year a significant boost to RIPTA's annual support. Given RIPTA's perilous financial condition, we believe that this additional funding would be a wise and helpful choice.

We urge the Committee to approve H -5467 and move it on to a floor vote.

Thank you 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