

May 21, 2025

RI House Finance Committee

RI State House

Providence, Rhode Island

To Whom it may concern,

We are writing in strong support of the following RIPTA Funding and Operations proposed bills:

H6020 sponsored by Rep. Alzate

H5405, sponsored by Rep. Morales

H5468, sponsored by Rep. Tanzi,

H5467, sponsored by Rep. Stewart

We are members of 'Save Kennedy Plaza'; and 'Save RIPTA'. We are also suburban residents in Edgwood who use RIPTA BY CHOICE-we do not own a car and rely solely on public transportation for medical appointments, shopping, church and recreational activities.

A sound well-funded public transportation system is essential to our state's economy, as well as being environmentally responsible. We

--Moving the hub out of Kennedy Plaza is very expensive. RIPTA board was told in December 2022 it would cost \$200-250 million.

--We can't afford to spend or borrow that money.

--If Next Wave builds a new hub as planned, they will have a guaranteed profit margin with little incentive to control costs.

--It's much cheaper to improve Kennedy Plaza and other existing bus hubs.

--Kennedy Plaza is the ideal location: it's central, near the streets and highways that buses use, and near rider destinations.

--The proposed sites adjacent to the train station aren't close enough to Rhode Island's biggest cluster of bus rider destinations.

--Next Wave, the company trying to move bus hub out of Kennedy Plaza, made a map of where bus riders want to go, showing that the biggest cluster of bus rider destinations is just south of Kennedy Plaza, not near the proposed new sites.

--We keep getting promises to listen to public input on the hub location, and these promises keep being broken. Next Wave hardly listens to bus riders but they admit people want to stay in Kennedy Plaza, and that's being ignored.

--The people leading the attempt to move the hub out of Kennedy Plaza aren't bus riders and don't care for public transit. Bus riders care more, we're the users. Next Wave's process ignores our knowledge and experience .

--The Next Wave deal to move the hub out of Kennedy Plaza is a bad use of money on an expensive project that riders don't even want.

--H6096 will block further spending on this contract after September, causing RIPTA to exercise its option to terminate the Next Wave deal. That will save money that's currently slated for this Next Wave contract and will allow a much better use of public funds to benefit bus riders and others.

Thank you for your consideration in these matters. We hope that the funds that are available be use to IMPROVE THE OPERATIONS of RIPTA, NOT spend millions of dollars to relocate something that already exists and can be improved for much less.

Sincerely,

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