

Dear Chairman Abney and Committee members,

My name is Merissa Homer, I live in Providence, and I am writing in support of Representative Tanzi's House bill H5470.

This bond for \$100 million would make great improvements and ensure we are working towards a more accessible, safer, and reliable public transit system in Rhode Island. This bond would provide direct funding for a statewide transit system by providing improvement to: bus stops and shelters; safety and access to bus stops including crosswalks, sidewalks, and curb ramps; mobility hub and passenger facility infrastructure including bathrooms, sheltered and secured bike racks, and indoor waiting areas.

I have the good fortune to live in the area of Providence served by RIPTA bus lines 27, 28, 17, and 19. While I have enjoyed many pleasant on-board experiences with clean and well-maintained bus interiors, I must admit the bus stop experience in nearly all of my RIPTA travels leaves something to be desired. The signage had no information in regards to hours of service, what routes serve that particular stop, if any delays or detours should be expected, etc, all of which made the service more intimidating to me and delayed my using the bus for the first time when I was new to the city and unfamiliar with RIPTA's service. There was also nowhere to sit while awaiting the bus, and no shelter of any sort. If there is any sort of inclement weather, I find myself more hesitant to use the bus to get around. I am already a public transit user and supporter, but small improvements around these kinds of issues would push me to use RIPTA's services even more than I do now.

I am particularly excited about the possibility of a light rail or bus rapid transit system connecting Providence to the PVD airport as laid out in the 2040 transit master plan. I already try to fly in and out of PVD over BOS whenever possible, and adding a convenient, frequent, high capacity transit option would make that an even easier choice for me.

I urge you to support H5470, to give public transit in Rhode Island the generational investment it needs to become a high-quality, 21st Century system that current and future residents and visitors can rely on.

Sincerely,

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Merissa Homer  
Providence, RI