

**Chris O'Brien**

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**From:** George W. Johnson <geowjohn53@verizon.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 21, 2025 10:41 AM  
**To:** House Finance Committee  
**Subject:** Support for H6006

Dear Chair Abney and House Finance Members,

My name is George Johnson, I live in Coventry and Rep. Earl Reed is my Representative.

I am retired from a 32+ year career in RI State Service with the Statewide Planning Program, during which I led creation of the 1994 Greenspace and Greenways Element of the State Guide Plan and worked with the RI Greenways Council to advance implementation of the statewide network of bikeways and trails recommended in the Plan.

With passage of past Greenways Bond referenda, and federal transportation funds from the Federal Highway Administration, Rhode Island made significant progress in getting the majority of the plan's recommended system constructed. However, a number of gaps remain which need to be completed. Moreover, an ambitious recent Statewide Bicycle Plan challenges the State to dramatically improve on-road cycling conditions and stitch together an integrated network of on-road routes with its greenways and off-road bikepaths.

Progress on this vision has lagged somewhat, in my view, as DOT's priorities have focused on much-needed bridge, Interstate and arterial highway rehabilitation and improvement. Indeed, a year or two into DOT's 10-year plan, funding promised for Bicycle Master Plan implementation was re-captured for bridge and highway work via a TIP Amendment, leaving bicycle plan project implementation to languish.

If the State is to move forward on its Bicycle Master Plan commitments and complete an integrated network as envisioned by the State Greenways Plan, continued, regular, and significant investment is needed, and a predictable source of funding is necessary. The bond proposed in H6006 would help greatly in this regard. Particularly, since national directions and priorities in highway investments may be in a state of flux and uncertainty over the near term with a new Administration, the availability of State resources will help ensure that the implementation of the Bicycle Master Plan and an integrated network continues.

The vision I helped establish in the 1994 Greenways Plan has brought many benefits to Rhode Islanders, and it is worthy of the State's continued pursuit and investment. Please support H6006 to help finish the job.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views.

Respectfully,

George W. Johnson  
Coventry, RI