

Dear Chair Cortvriend and Committee members,

My name is Alexandra, I live in Providence, and I am here/writing in support of Bill H7127 and restoration of funding for RIPTA. I do not have a car, never got a license. I'm from New Jersey, where that really does NOT work, you must drive in that state. I moved to Providence hoping to have a better quality of life than was offered to me there- here I could get around independently of my family. I find it disgraceful to strip what access the many thousands of people who rely on public transit had in this small state. We already were contending with skipped busses, irregular timing, and not knowing if we would have a bus at all to depend on, sometimes in the worst of conditions. The governor thought even that was more than we deserved? What a slap in the face.

As a transit rider and supporter, I am relying on you to support this bill which provides level funding for RIPTA at its current reduced size, and implore you to support increased funding to reverse the devastating service cuts in 2025. High quality public transportation in Rhode Island should be a no-brainer, with our compact size and abundance of destinations, getting around the state by bus is something everyone should be able to do, and an obvious investment in a public good. Instead, we continue to return to the State House to implore you to maintain the bare minimum funding to keep the system afloat. It's time to turn this vicious cycle into a virtuous one.

A recent report from the American Public Transit Authority confirmed what most of us already know: for every \$1 billion invested in public transportation, \$5 billion is generated in long-term economic value and supports jobs nationwide. That job support works out to \$3.1 billion in earned wages for every \$1 billion invested in public transit, according to the report. I encourage you to read the report: <https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-Economic-Impact-of-Public-Transportation-022026.pdf>

I urge you to support the funding for RIPTA in the Governor's Budget, H7127 and to advocate for the restoration of funding that resulted in devastating service cuts this fall. Fully funding RIPTA is an investment that will give many returns: working class Rhode Islanders access to reliable and affordable transportation, economic growth and access to jobs and services, reduction in carbon emissions and traffic on the road, and so many more. Please support this investment to get Rhode Island back on track to create a 21st century transit system that works for everyone.

I urge you to support H7127 and increased funding for RIPTA.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Perkins

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