

THE PROVIDENCE FOUNDATION

March 10, 2026

The Honorable Terri Cortvriend
Chair
House Finance Subcommittee on Environment & Transportation
Rhode Island House of Representatives

RE: H 7127- Governor's FY 2027 Budget- RIPTA Funding

Dear Chair Cortvriend and Members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the Providence Foundation, I write to express our support for the \$13.8 million allocation in the FY 2027 budget (H 7127) to address the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority's (RIPTA) deficit and maintain essential transit service. We thank Governor McKee for recognizing the importance of public transportation by including this funding in his proposed budget.

Reliable public transportation is essential to the economic health of Downtown Providence and Rhode Island. RIPTA connects residents to jobs, services, and schools while supporting the businesses and institutions that keep downtown vibrant. The Providence Foundation continues to support public transit and advocates for a modern downtown transit center to better serve riders and strengthen the system.

As a transit rider myself, I have experienced the impact of reduced service frequency on the Route 57 line. Many employees who work in Downtown Providence rely on this route and others like to get to work. While we recognize the increased costs of operating RIPTA, reduced service creates real barriers for workers and employers alike, while missing opportunities for prospective users to grow ridership.

Reliable public transportation is also critical to Downtown Providence's small businesses. RIPTA brings workers, customers, and visitors to the city for conventions, Providence Friars games, or dining and shopping. This makes it easier to access downtown and supports the restaurants, shops, and local businesses that drive the city's economy. National research shows that every \$1 billion invested in public transportation generates roughly \$5 billion in long-term economic value.¹

This funding will help maintain and strengthen RIPTA's service, ensuring reliable transit for riders across the state. Approving this allocation is an important step toward stabilizing the system and expanding service in the future. We also want to thank RIPTA for its ongoing

¹ American Public Transportation Association. (2026). *Economic impact of public transportation investment* (Report prepared by EBP). <https://www.apta.com/wp-content/uploads/APTA-Economic-Impact-of-Public-Transportation-022026.pdf>

advocacy for riders and its efforts to improve public transit options throughout Rhode Island.

For these reasons, the Providence Foundation urges the committee to support the recommended \$13.8 million RIPTA budget and continue working toward a reliable, modern transit system for Downtown Providence and Rhode Island.

Sincerely,



David A. Salvatore
Executive Director
The Providence Foundation