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Sustainable Economic Growth  
& Quality of Place

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March 10, 2026

The Honorable Representative Terri Cortvriend, Chair  
House Finance Subcommittee on Environment and Transportation  
State House  
Providence, RI 02903  
VIA EMAIL - [HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov)

Re: Support for H-7127 Governor's FY27, FY26 Revised & Capital Budgets (RIPTA)

Dear Chair Cortvriend and Committee Members,

On behalf of Grow Smart RI, I'm writing to express support for H-7127, as well as continued concern about the well-reported and chronic underfunding of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) and the impact this is having on hard-working Rhode Islanders and the businesses and institutions for whom they work.

Grow Smart RI is Rhode Island's statewide smart growth advocacy organization. We represent a big-tent coalition of business and civic leaders along with community stakeholders committed to strengthening and growing Rhode Island's economy in a sustainable and equitable way. We work with community partners across the state to integrate smart land use, transportation and housing policies in a way that uses resources most efficiently and that creates vibrant and opportunity rich places for all to thrive.

As many know, for decades RIPTA's revenue has not kept pace with the inflationary pressure on its expenses, despite RIPTA's time and again [demonstrated](#) efficiency. And while the Governor's proposed FY27 State Budget would close RIPTA's projected deficit for FY27, it does not restore the sweeping and damaging service cuts that took effect last September due to insufficient funding. This is despite the earnest and appreciated efforts of the General Assembly to avoid such service cuts.

And we now know the harmful impacts to so many Rhode Islanders and businesses as outlined in the [2025 Service Cuts Impact Report](#).

That is why Grow Smart also supports Rep. Alzate's proposed H-8256 that would increase funding by \$5 million to restore service that was severely cut last September.

The lack of a reliable and sustainable funding source has held Rhode Island back from achieving the benefits of a data-driven and state-adopted vision for improving transit - increased ridership and affordability, more transit-oriented housing development, economic growth and progress in meeting the state's Act on Climate requirements.

Grow Smart has undertaken initial research on a longer term "pro-growth" [value-capture](#) funding proposal that does not rely on broad-based tax or fee increases to fund transit. We would be happy to discuss that with you or the committee at your convenience.

John Flaherty  
Senior Advisor and Special Projects