

To Chair Cortvriend and Honorable Members of the Committee:

My name is Kate Chess. I'm writing this testimony to urge your support of **H7127** to fully fund RIPTA.

I am visually impaired. I can't drive, but I can and do work and pay taxes. Like many Rhode Islanders, I rely on RIPTA to get around. I also use the bus to go places with my 6 year old daughter, since I can't drive her places.

Fully funding public transportation helps people like me who depend on the bus — but it also makes our state greener, reduces congestion on the road for everyone, and makes Rhode Island an appealing place to live and work. Our government's constant deprioritization of the public transportation system makes me wonder why I choose to live here, especially when neighboring states like Massachusetts and Connecticut invest more. Cuts have led families like mine a to choose to leave the state. Businesses have made the same choice.

But you can turn it around by thinking of the future and supporting the full budgetary funding, including the \$13.8M in the Governor's FY2027 budget to close RIPTA budget deficit. I urge you to support Rep. Alzate's [H8256](#) to increase funding by \$5 million and return RIPTA to September 2025 levels.

Thanks for your attention to this matter.

Kate Chess

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KATE CHESS