

TO: House Finance Subcommittee on Environment & Transportation, Rep. Terri Cortvriend,
Chair

SUBJECT: SUPPORT (H7127) - \$13.8million Budget Allocation for RIPTA deficit

Via Email: HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov

Dear Chair Cortvriend and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Susan Brand, and I live in the Elmhurst neighborhood of Providence. I am writing you to support **Bill H7127**, which will fund the RIPTA budget. I urge you to restore funding for RIPTA by undoing service cuts. I am semi-retired and have been using RIPTA since I moved here two years ago. I specifically chose this neighborhood for its proximity to bus lines. I rely on RIPTA to get me to grocery stores, medical appointments, and social activities. I am on a fixed income and simply can't afford to rely on services like Uber or Lyft. Funding needs to be put in place so that I and others in my situation can continue to work and participate in the greater community of Providence and Rhode Island.

As I rely on public transit, I am relying on you to support this bill. It provides level funding for RIPTA at its current reduced size. I also implore you to support increased funding to reverse the devastating service cuts in 2025! High-quality public transportation in Rhode Island should be a given. With our compact size and number of destinations, getting around the state by bus is something everyone should be able to do, and an obvious investment in a public good. Not only that, the boost to tourism would come naturally. Instead, we continue to return to the State House to plead with you to maintain the bare minimum funding simply to keep the system afloat. It's time to look into the future and do what's right.

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>

Do what's right for Rhode Island's future, and support the funding for RIPTA in the Governor's Budget, H7127. Please advocate for the restoration of funding that resulted in devastating and demoralizing service cuts this past fall. Fully funding RIPTA is an investment that will result in valuable returns: working-class Rhode Islanders' access to reliable and affordable transportation; economic growth with access to jobs and services; reduction in carbon emissions and traffic on the road, and much more. Please support this investment to get Rhode Island back on track to create a 21st-century transit system that works for everyone AND the environment.

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

Sincerely,

Susan Brand

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