



Rhode Island Organizing Project
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TO: House Finance Committee
SUBJECT: SUPPORT (H8145) – Rideshare Sales Tax Reallocation to RIPTA's Paratransit Programs.
Via Email: HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov

Dear Chair Abney and Committee members,

My name is Raymond Gagne, and I am writing in my capacity as the Director of the RI Organizing Project (RIOP). I am writing in support of H8145- Rideshare Sales Tax Reallocation to RIPTA's Paratransit Programs.

The Rhode Island Organizing Project (RIOP) works with many bus riders who depend upon the RIPTA Paratransit system. The Ride program receives high customer satisfaction ratings from bus riders. The introduction of the Ride Anywhere program has made the Ride program even stronger.

My friend Ed Soares recently passed away. He was a long-time user of RIPTA's fixed route system. Towards the end of his life he was no longer able to use the fixed route system. The Ride Program allowed him to spend the remaining years of his life with dignity. He was able to use the Ride for essential services and remain involved in the community by participating in groups such as the RIPTA ATAC Committee. Without the Ride program he would have been isolated and stuck in his apartment. Mr. Soares' story is not unique. Thousands of Rhode Island residents depend upon the Ride program to meet their daily transportation needs.

I ask for your support of H8145. The Ride Program needs a stable source of income to continue to provide excellent service to the people who need it the most.

Sincerely,

Raymond Gagne
Director, RI Organizing Project