

Dear Chair Abney and Honorable members of the Committee,

My name is Kenny Uong, I live in Providence, and I would like to express my support for Representative Cortvriend's H8178.

Transit is really important to me because it helps me get where I need to go at any time of day. However, as you already know, tens of thousands of riders like myself have been impacted by the devastating service cuts that took effect last September. The funding that Governor McKee is proposing in his budget for RIPTA will not be enough to reverse those cuts. This piece of legislation would help provide a more sustainable funding stream for the agency.

Compared to federal standards, Rhode Island is shortchanging RIPTA through the Highway Maintenance Account. Since 1982, Congress has generally followed an 80/20 split between highways and transit, but Rhode Island currently uses a 90/10 split. That gap matters, and RIPTA needs a larger and more reliable state funding source to actually keep up with demand.

As a transit rider and advocate, I'm counting on you to support this straightforward solution to strengthen both revenue and ridership for RIPTA. Funding that doesn't rely so heavily on federal dollars or declining gas tax revenue would bring financial stability and allow RIPTA to expand service for a growing population that depends on affordable and sustainable transportation.

I urge you to support H8178 to increase revenue for RIPTA and give Rhode Islanders better access to reliable, affordable transit, along with the stable funding needed for the system to thrive.

Thank you,

Kenny Uong

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