

Chris O'Brien

From: Emily Egginton Skeehan <emily.egginton@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2026 12:07 PM
To: House Finance Committee
Subject: SUPPORT (H8298) - Rhode Island Bike Path Bond Question

Categories: Red category

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Re: Letter of Support — Rhode Island Bike Path Bond Question (H8298)

Chairman Abney and Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Portsmouth Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to express my strong support for H8298, the proposed bond measure to fund the implementation of the Rhode Island Statewide Bicycle Mobility Plan and completion of bike paths across Rhode Island. It has been 8 years since we last included funding in our Green Bond, and when asked, voters overwhelmingly supported the investment, with 78.9% voting yes.

Safe, well-connected bicycle infrastructure is a sound public investment. Rhode Island's communities stand to benefit in multiple ways: reduced traffic congestion, improved air quality, stronger public health outcomes, and increased economic activity along active transportation corridors. Studies consistently show that every dollar invested in bike infrastructure yields significant returns through tourism, local business activity, and reduced healthcare costs. As a Portsmouth RI School Committee member, we have a big focus on student and staff wellness. Several studies have demonstrated a decrease in depression symptoms from cycling, while others have shown an overall increase in emotional well-being and happiness therefore promotion of bike paths should be coordinated with RIDE.

Rhode Island already has a proud legacy in this space — East Bay Bike Path and the South County Bike Path are beloved assets that draw residents and visitors alike. Dedicated bond funding would allow the state to close critical gaps in the network, improve safety at dangerous intersections, and expand access to communities that rely on cycling for everyday transportation, as well as those of all ages who use it for recreation.

We urge the Committee to support H8298, adding this component to the Green Bond question in 2026 and give voters the opportunity to once again invest in bike paths and in Rhode Island's future — one that is healthier, greener, and more connected.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Emily Skeehan
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