

Chris O'Brien

From: Lisa Watts <4lisawatts@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2026 7:34 AM
To: House Finance Committee
Subject: SUPPORT (H8298) - Rhode Island Bike Path Bond Question

Categories: Red category

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Lisa Watts
22 Kirby St, Barrington, RI 02806
April 14, 2026

Re: Letter of SUPPORT (H8298) - Rhode Island Bike Path Bond Question

Chair Abney and Honorable Members of the House Finance Committee,

I write to urge your support for H8298, the proposed bond measure to fund the implementation of the Rhode Island Statewide Bicycle Mobility Plan.

Rhode Island was an early leader in developing safe, inspiring bike paths and greenways that draw pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities to enjoy the beauty of our state's coastlines and natural spaces while exercising safely and/or enjoying an alternative, gas-free mode of transportation.

As a bicycle commuter and bike tourist all my life, I chose to retire in Rhode Island in large part because my husband and I can use the East Bay Bike Path almost daily, enjoying car-free access to Providence and points north as well as for exercise and running errands — car-free — on the East Bay.

Dedicated bond funding would allow the state to close critical gaps in the network, improve safety at dangerous intersections, and expand access so that more Rhode Island residents can rely on cycling for everyday transportation. Safe, well-connected bicycle infrastructure is a sound public investment in reducing traffic congestion, improving air quality, strengthening public health, and increasing economic activity along active transportation corridors (as case study A, we bought our home in 2022 because it sits two houses from the EBBP). Studies consistently show that every dollar invested in bike infrastructure yields significant returns through tourism, local business activity, and reduced healthcare costs.

It has been 8 years since we last included bike path funding in our Green Bond and when asked, voters overwhelmingly supported the investment, with 78.9% voting yes.

I urge the Committee to support H8298, adding this component to the Green Bond question in 2026. 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.

Thanks for your consideration,

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