

Via Electronic Mail

April 14, 2026

The Honorable Senator Marvin L. Abney
Chair, House Committee on Finance
Room 35, State House
Providence, RI 02903

Re: CLF **Supports:** House Bill No. 8145; House Bill No. 8202; House Bill No. 8315;
House Bill No. 8369; and House Bill No. 8317 (Collectively hereinafter referred to as the
“RIPTA Legislation”).

Dear Chair Abney:

The Conservation Law Foundation (“CLF”) supports the RIPTA Legislation.

CLF is a member-supported non-profit advocacy organization working to protect public health and the environment and build healthy communities in Rhode Island and throughout New England. CLF supports policies that increase services and ridership on RIPTA’s bus system and help to achieve the greenhouse gas emissions reduction mandates of the Act on Climate.

CLF works alongside several RIPTA transit rider advocacy groups, including the Kennedy Plaza Coalition, the Save RIPTA Coalition, Providence Streets Coalition, Rhode Island Transit Riders, and GrowSmartRI (collectively the “RIPTA Rider Advocates”). CLF, along with the RIPTA Rider Advocates, believe that affordable access to transportation is a fundamental human right for all Rhode Island residents.

According to the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management’s published Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory, Rhode Island’s transportation sector accounts for 37% of the state’s greenhouse gas emissions.¹ On April 14, 2021, Governor McKee signed into law the Act on Climate, which sets enforceable climate emissions reduction mandates.² In particular, the Act on Climate mandates that Rhode Island achieve greenhouse gas emissions of 45% below 1990 levels by 2030, 80% by 2040, and net-zero emissions by 2050.³

¹ R.I. Dep’t of Env’tl. Mgmt., *2023 Rhode Island Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory* (2025), available at <https://dem.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur861/files/2025-11/RIDEM-ghg-inventory-2023.pdf>

² R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-6.2-9.

³ *Id.*

These targets can only be achieved by substantially reducing the number of personal carbon-producing vehicles on Rhode Island's roads. One of the best tools in Rhode Island's toolbox to meet this target is to substantially increase RIPTA ridership. Moreover, since RIPTA currently serves many low-income communities in Rhode Island, there are compelling environmental justice issues that can only be addressed by fully funding RIPTA and funding the recommendations of the Transit Master Plan.

We therefore ask that you pass all the RIPTA Legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,



Richard Stang
Senior Attorney, Rhode Island
Conservation Law Foundation

cc: Members of the Senate Committee on Finance
Representative Edith H. Ajello
Representative Jose F. Batista
Representative Lauren H. Carson
Representative Megan L. Cotter
Representative Cherie L. Cruz
Representative Matthew S. Dawson
Representative Anthony J. DiSimone
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