

Dear Chair Abney and Committee members,

My name is Judith A. Byrnes, and I live in Bristol, RI, District 68, Rep. Speakman.

I am writing in strong support of H8315, Representative Stewart's gas tax inflation indexing bill.

Our economy cannot thrive without a robust public transportation system.

RIPTA's current funding is closely tied to the state's gasoline tax. Over the last decade, RIPTA was shortchanged by \$7 million annually because its 9.75 cent allocation did not keep pace with the overall increase in the gas tax, which has risen from 32.5 cents to 38 cents per gallon, including an environmental fee. This missing \$7 million was essential to address RIPTA's fiscal cliff last year, and I thank you and your colleagues for addressing this discrepancy by allocating an additional 2 cents of the gas tax to RIPTA in real, long term funding.

However, this additional allocation is still not indexed to inflation. Absent legislative action, RIPTA's financial path is still not sustainable.

With this bill, we have an opportunity to create a more predictable funding source for public transit in Rhode Island that will not shrink steadily over time. I urge you to support H8315, to give RIPTA a permanently fair share of the Motor Fuel Tax and support the riders who rely on the service.

Thank you for your consideration in support of H8315.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Byrnes

Bristol, RI

13 April 2026