

Dear Chair Abney and Committee members,

My name is Eric Harrison, I live in the Lonsdale section of Lincoln, and I am writing in support of Bill H8317, Representative Alzate's \$5M allocation to reverse RIPTA's service cuts.

I live in the corner of Lincoln closest to Central Falls and Pawtucket, and I rely on RIPTA to help me get around without a car. I don't drive unless I have to, and RIPTA routes 75 and 71 help me drive less than I otherwise would. Recently however I have been driving more since the 75 lost all its weekend service, which is when I used it most frequently to get to Lincoln Mall or the Pawtucket/CF station. Now I either drive to the mall or don't go at all. The 71 used to provide a reliable 40 minute frequency, but that has now been cut to an irregular schedule that is much more difficult to plan around.

My issues are ones of convenience and choice, but thousands of other Rhode Islanders don't have the choice to drive and have lost access to jobs, friends, family, shopping, recreation, worship, and freedom. A [report](#) released by the Save RIPTA coalition found that since the service cuts went into effect in September 2025:

- Ridership dropped 12.1% or about 125,000 trips by November
- 30% of RIPTA riders are at risk of losing employment, 8% lost pay, and 3.6% lost their jobs directly
- RIPTA operators' working conditions have deteriorated
- RIPTA service has gotten 29% more expensive to operate per service hour

'Public Transit' is mentioned no less than 80 times in Rhode Island's own strategic plans for [economic development](#), [housing production](#), and [climate](#). However, the service cuts have left RIPTA too small and crippled to even meet the needs of its existing riders, let alone expand to strengthen our state's competitiveness and livability.

That's why I'm urging you to support H8317. Without reversing RIPTA's devastating service cuts, RIPTA cannot meet the needs of a growing population that requires affordable and sustainable transportation, and RIPTA cannot grow to meet our climate, social justice, and economic goals.

Sincerely,

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