

Chair Corvese and Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 5304, the Commuter Transportation Benefits Act. Large employers that refuse to offer transit access leads to inequities for those who don't drive, poor land use due to needed parking, and increased congestion. In a small state like Rhode Island, we don't have unlimited space to build unlimited amounts of parking lots (nor would anyone want to live there if it were) and with the Washington Bridge construction, we need all the traffic congestion help we possibly can. This reason alone should be enough to pass this legislation. Encouraging people to use public transit would also help us reach our state's climate emissions goals by reducing the number of cars on the road. Approximately 70% of commuters drive alone to and from work. The top 25 employers in Rhode Island employ a combined 101,800 people (Source: PBN). If even a fraction of those employees took transit, it would have a profound impact on RIPTA ridership, carbon emissions, and highway congestion. Commuters who utilize the Transit Benefit enjoyed savings on their commute of as much as 30% (Source: Association for Commuter Transportation), while providing employers with lowered operating costs.

As a commuter myself, I would love to see this option through my employer. In a world where things are already and about to get even more expensive, it would save me so much money on gas and car maintenance.

I urge you to support H5304, to support workers and increase revenue for RIPTA, giving Rhode Island workers access to affordable transportation and growing the base of ridership for public transit.

Thank you.

-Alex Denisevich  
East Greenwich, RI