

March 5, 2005

To Chairman Corvese and the Members of the House Labor Committee,

My name is Susan Killenberg. I live in Little Compton. I am writing in support of House Bill 5304, The Commuter Transportation Benefits Act.

Prior to the pandemic and my ability to work remotely, I commuted to my office in Providence on RIPTA bus route #61X. I caught the bus at the Tiverton Park-and-Ride and was dropped off in Kennedy Plaza, steps away from my office on Fountain Street. It was a convenient, reliable, safe, comfortable, affordable and climate-conscious way to get to and from work each day. The Commuter Transportation Benefit Act would encourage more people to take advantage of RIPTA services for these same reasons.

Furthermore, this bill would provide financial relief to workers. Offering transit passes would ensure that employees, especially those with lower incomes, can access affordable transportation, reducing the burden of expensive gas, parking, car insurance and auto maintenance.

The Commuter Transportation Benefits Act would also improve Rhode Island's competitiveness as a business-friendly destination. By providing employees with reliable and affordable public transportation, employers will attract and retain a more diverse and skilled talent pool.

The Commuter Transportation Benefits Act would also provide an innovative, supplemental source of revenue for RIPTA. Securing new and diverse funding streams that do not rely on the federal government or declining gas tax revenue is imperative to preserve RIPTA services. This additional funding may also allow for a much-needed expansion of service to meet the travel needs of a growing population.

I urge you to support H5304. This bill will give Rhode Island workers access to affordable transportation, reduce highway congestion and fossil fuel emissions, support funding for RIPTA and grow the base of ridership for public transit.

Sincerely,

Susan Killenberg

Little Compton, RI