

## Steven Sepe

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**From:** will masse <willmasse@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 3, 2026 8:37 AM  
**To:** House State Government and Elections Committee  
**Subject:** Support FOR HB 7499 AND 7984

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Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is William Masse, I live in Warwick. I am writing in strong support of House Bill 7499 and House Bill 7984, both of which call for an independent performance and efficiency audit of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation.

These bills represent an important and overdue step toward transparency, accountability, and responsible stewardship of public funds.

The Department of Transportation represents one of the largest and most financially consequential agencies in state government. Its budget consumes a substantial portion of Rhode Island's public resources each year. Yet despite this scale of spending, there has not been a comprehensive, independent evaluation of its operational efficiency and financial performance in recent years. Taxpayers deserve clarity on whether funds are being allocated effectively, projects are being delivered efficiently, and administrative costs are proportionate to outcomes.

The financial burden that RIDOT places on the state is significant. Major infrastructure projects routinely require large capital expenditures, bonding, and long-term debt commitments that shape Rhode Island's fiscal landscape for decades. Without an independent audit, policymakers and the public lack a clear, objective assessment of whether these investments are producing maximum value.

Importantly, every dollar that is inefficiently spent within RIDOT is a dollar unavailable for other critical transportation priorities. One area particularly affected is the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA). Public transit serves thousands of Rhode Islanders daily—especially seniors, students, low-income residents, and individuals with disabilities. RIPTA provides essential mobility for work, healthcare, and education, yet it consistently operates under financial constraints.

If inefficiencies exist within RIDOT, identifying and correcting them could help relieve fiscal pressure on the state and free up resources that could strengthen public transit service. A balanced and modern transportation system requires both well-maintained roads and robust public transit. Ensuring RIDOT operates at peak efficiency is essential to achieving that balance.

An independent audit—whether commissioned through the Department of Administration or conducted by the Auditor General—would provide lawmakers with data-driven insights into cost controls, project management practices, administrative overhead, procurement processes, and long-term financial planning. This information would empower the General Assembly to make informed budgetary and policy decisions.

Supporting these bills is not a criticism of transportation infrastructure or the professionals who work within RIDOT. Rather, it reflects a commitment to good governance. Independent audits are standard best practice in both public and private sectors. They strengthen public trust and ensure that large agencies remain accountable to the taxpayers they serve.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to recommend passage of H7499 and/or H7984.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
William Masse