

Hello,

I am a parent of two girls who take the bus from Providence to St. Mary Academy Bay View. As a family we try to reduce our car use whenever possible and are thankful that we can walk 6 minutes to a bus stop and not have to drive to Riverside. We have a large group of students that meet the bus at the same stop near the old fire station at the Cole, Humboldt Irving intersection. At arrival to our stop, the bus is nearly full of many students sharing transport from Providence and Pawtucket areas, reducing much car traffic, and at least one other school will utilize the same bus/route as well, headed into East Providence. We are in a position to choose to pay for a Catholic education for our children since this is something we value, while still support public education through our tax dollars. However, we apply for aid and it would be a hardship to pay additional fees for bussing, and I worry that if other families also cannot afford to pay a fee for private bussing, the option would not even exist and many families would be forced to drive their students to school.

Providing bussing for private students has an environmental and traffic reducing impact that all Rhode Islanders benefit from, particularly in this current time of increased traffic due to the Washington Bridge. I urge the State of Rhode Island General Assembly's Student Transportation Commission to continue to support the bussing of Rhode Island school children, no matter where they go to school.

Thank you,

Amy Thomas

Parent of 5th grade and 2nd grade students at St. Mary Academy Bay View

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