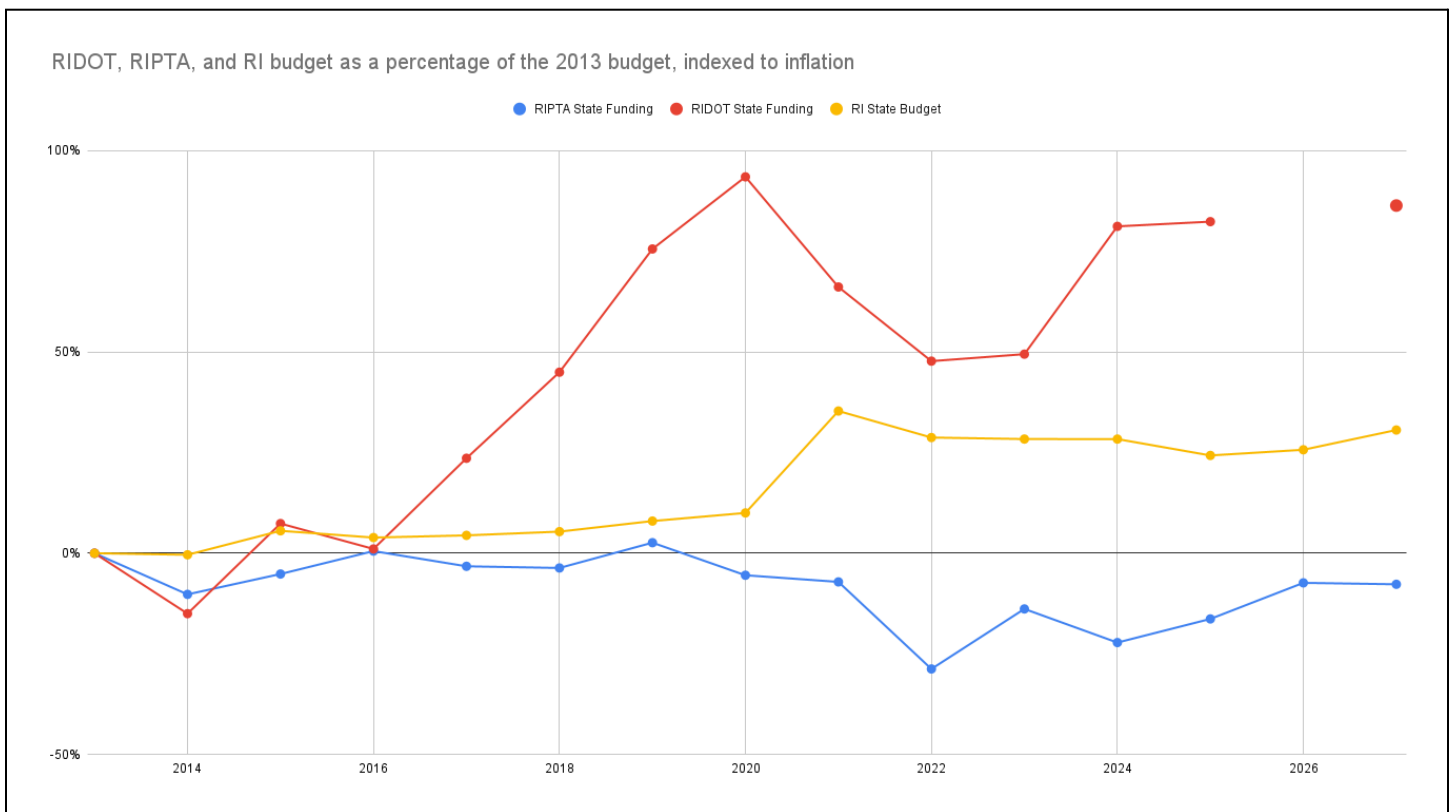


Dear Chair DiPalma and Committee members,

My name is Cedric Ye, and I am a high school student who lives in Providence. I am writing in support of S2095, which would convert Governor McKee's proposed \$9.3M increase of the Highway Maintenance Account into a predictable 20% share of the Highway Maintenance Account.

RIPTA's unprecedented service cuts have been devastating for transit riders like me. Although my route's frequency was reduced by just 10 minutes, my commute from school has doubled in length because I now have to wait a full 40 minutes for the bus instead of 5. Often, buses run so late that it is faster for me to walk, and I've often ridden buses so crowded we broke federal law. Even so, I consider myself a lucky transit rider -- 30% of respondents to a rider survey reported being concerned about their employment, and 3% have already lost their jobs as a result of the service cuts.

The service cuts are an unfortunate but predictable outcome of RIPTA's broken funding model. **RIPTA's biggest revenue source, the gas tax, is not indexed to inflation. Between FY2013 and the FY2025 budget, when indexed to 2013 dollars, RIPTA's state funding decreased by 16% even when including you and your colleagues' historic \$15M investment into RIPTA. Across the same period, the state budget increased 24% and RIDOT's state funding ballooned by 82%.**



*\*In the FY 2026 budget, RIDOT's state funding grew from 82% to 214% of 2013 levels due to a significant, one-year increase in "other funds". This data point was excluded because this increase corresponded with a drop in federal funding, so I was unsure that "other funds" only represented state sources during that year. An appendix for this graph is posted below.*

**This is an astonishing disparity that has deprived tens of thousands of Rhode Islanders of a reliable, convenient public transit system that advances our state's climate, economic, and social justice goals.** It also makes your job as the Senate Finance Committee more difficult -- instead of being able to depend on a

sustainable funding model, RIPTA faces fiscal cliffs during the most difficult budgetary years. Unfortunately, your recent historic investments in RIPTA -- such as the recent increase in the gas tax -- repeat the same problem, as they are also not indexed to inflation.

**Rhode Island can and must dedicate more funding for transportation -- in fact, most peer states already do.** Massachusetts' proposed FY2027 budget directs over 70% of state transportation funding to public transit. Connecticut DOT's FY2026 transportation budget directs 57% of capital spending to public transit. Delaware's FY2026 budget allocated 45.7% of transportation funding to public transit. In comparison, Rhode Island allocates just 17.5% of transportation funding to public transit. **S2095 and other bills like Senator Zurier's S2668 (29% gas tax index to RIPTA) are not even attempts to reduce this gap;** they simply prevent it from expanding further. S2095 would turn Governor McKee's proposed \$9.3M Highway Maintenance Account allocation to RIPTA and index it to inflation so that RIPTA's financial foundation will last for decades, instead of eroding into a fiscal cliff every other year.

**I urge you to please support S2095 and the rest of the Save RIPTA package** to ensure that RIPTA finally receives the funding that it deserves. In our unprecedented climate crisis, affordability crisis, and housing crisis, there has never been a more urgent time to ensure that our public transit funding keeps up with inflation.

Thank you so much for your consideration,  
Cedric Ye

43 Irving Avenue, Providence, 02906

## Data Appendix

FY (audited/actual budgets unless stated)	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026 (Revised)	2027 (proposed)
State Budget (Billions)	8.1	8.20	8.70	8.67	8.90	9.20	9.60	9.90	12.75	13.10	13.60	14.00	14.00	14.34	14.90
Special Project - Local/fed + Special Revenue (2025)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$695,920	\$541,335	\$252,003	\$22,373	\$1,164,985	\$945,955	\$0	\$3,380,051.00	2496000
RIPTA Other Funds	\$16,321,712	\$11,297,868	\$12,133,290	\$10,406,186	\$11,144,545	\$10,327,087	\$13,014,938	\$13,115,326	\$15,550,366	\$5,708,431	\$14,533,683	\$9,692,772	\$10,431,754	\$9,012,895.00	9092851
RIPTA Gas Tax	\$40,780,987	\$40,772,268	\$42,960,320	\$44,068,106	\$42,576,851	\$43,731,401	\$44,169,207	\$40,272,927	\$39,681,075	\$41,786,019	\$41,889,856	\$43,884,284	\$36,331,771	\$50,962,876.00	50,635,756
DHS	\$836,424	\$794,796	\$812,083	\$815,243	\$813,613	\$813,663	\$1,189,092	\$813,663	\$813,663	\$813,663	\$813,663	\$813,663	\$813,663	\$926,440.00	904,447
State General Revenue Assistance/Fiscal Recovery Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,000,000	\$900,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$14,995,500	\$0

State Highway Fund/Highway Maintenance	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,723,453	\$3,544,082	\$5,297,730	\$6,181,619	\$6,106,524	\$6,298,951	\$3,536,525	\$6,900,723	\$5,374,413	\$4,852,489	\$11,319,435.00	12,182,754
RIPTA State Overall	\$57,939,123	\$52,864,932	\$55,905,693	\$60,012,988	\$58,979,091	\$60,169,881	\$65,250,776	\$60,849,775	\$62,596,058	\$51,867,011	\$65,302,910	\$60,711,087	\$67,425,177	\$75,601,697	\$75,311,808
DOT General Revenue	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$858,464	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0	0
DOT Restricted Receipts	\$973,230	\$7,202,773	\$2,411,276	\$2,890,620	\$1,278,394	\$1,620,091	\$2,626,915	\$4,648,259	\$1,293,528	\$2,391,305	-\$2,749,665	\$1,961,976	\$2,306,205	1,899,965	4,459,559
DOT Operating transfers from other funds	\$34,196,983	\$11,465,302	\$22,679,324	\$12,052,271	\$32,649,645	\$40,517,778	\$47,326,060	\$37,419,971	\$981,902	\$65,524,500	\$62,022,420	\$116,735,823	\$2,306,205	130,010,032	59,993,553
DOT Other Funds	\$100,300,419	\$98,353,122	\$122,893,604	\$126,187,709	\$142,218,692	\$169,558,951	\$211,077,950	\$248,277,732	\$259,510,094	\$183,475,326	\$205,548,363	\$211,837,705	\$338,928,978	467,261,131	291,120,300
DOT State Overall	\$135,470,632	\$117,021,197	\$147,984,204	\$141,061,600	\$176,146,731	\$211,696,820	\$261,030,925	\$291,204,426	\$261,785,524	\$251,391,131	\$264,821,118	\$330,535,504	\$343,541,388	\$599,171,128	\$355,573,412
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
RIPTA State Funding as % of 2013 level	0.00%	-8.76%	-3.51%	3.58%	1.79%	3.85%	12.62%	5.02%	8.04%	-10.48%	12.71%	4.78%	16.37%	30.48%	29.98%
RIDOT State Funding as % of 2013 level	0.00%	-13.62%	9.24%	4.13%	30.03%	56.27%	92.68%	114.96%	93.24%	85.57%	95.48%	143.99%	153.59%	342.29%	162.47%
RI State Budget as % of 2013 level	0.00%	1.23%	7.41%	7.04%	9.88%	13.58%	18.52%	22.22%	57.41%	61.73%	67.90%	72.84%	72.84%	77.04%	83.95%
Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027 (using 2026 dollars)
Conversion rate to 2013 dollars	1	0.984	0.9829	0.9706	0.9505	0.9277	0.9112	0.9001	0.8597	0.796	0.7645	0.7426	0.7191	0.71	0.71
RIPTA State Funding in 2013 Dollars	\$57,939,123	\$52,019,093	\$54,949,706	\$58,248,606	\$56,059,626	\$55,819,599	\$59,456,507	\$54,770,882	\$53,813,831	\$41,286,141	\$49,924,075	\$45,084,053	\$48,485,445	\$53,677,205	\$53,471,384
RIDOT State Funding in 2013 Dollars	\$135,470,632	\$115,148,858	\$145,453,674	\$136,914,389	\$167,427,468	\$196,391,140	\$237,851,379	\$262,113,104	\$225,057,015	\$200,107,340	\$202,455,745	\$245,455,665	\$247,040,612	\$425,411,501	\$252,457,123
RI State Budget in 2013 Dollars (Billions)	\$8.10	\$8.07	\$8.55	\$8.42	\$8.46	\$8.53	\$8.75	\$8.91	\$10.96	\$10.43	\$10.40	\$10.40	\$10.07	\$10.18	\$10.58
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
RIPTA State Funding as % of 2013 level, in 2013 dollars	0%	-10%	-5%	1%	-3%	-4%	3%	-5%	-7%	-29%	-14%	-22%	-16%	-7%	-8%
RIDOT State Funding as % of 2013 level, in 2013 dollars	0%	-15%	7%	1%	24%	45%	76%	93%	66%	48%	49%	81%	82%	214%	86%
RI State Budget as % of 2013 level, in 2013 dollars	0%	0%	6%	4%	4%	5%	8%	10%	35%	29%	28%	28%	24%	26%	31%

All RIPTA/RIDOT data sourced from OMB documents. State Budget numbers sourced from the Providence Journal, Rhode Island Current, and other local media stations. Conversion rates sourced from the US Inflation Calculator. Access individual sources here: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NtpU11Rk7q7gPnkGH1SbPEFLWw0m3a0YxfHkOnAlfxk/edit?pli=1&gid=0#gid=0>