

Dear Chair DiPalma and Committee members,

My name is Madison, I live in Providence, and I am here/writing in support of Bill S2095. Public transit has opened up numerous possibilities to explore the state that I study in, and has allowed me to connect with friends and family in the state. From aunts to cousins, RIPTA has been the way I travel to see them and experience Rhode Island. The cuts have made it so that what should be a quick trip and visit turns into a whole day commitment, completely interrupting our days and making it difficult to foster community.

In comparison to federal standards, Rhode Island's Highway Maintenance Account (HMA) shortchanges RIPTA. An 80/20 split for surface transportation funding between highways and mass transit has been the standard in Congress since 1982, yet Rhode Island practices a 90/10 split. RIPTA needs a larger and more predictable state funding source in order to thrive.

As a transit rider and supporter, I am relying on you to support this simple solution for increasing revenue and ridership for RIPTA. Securing funding streams that do not rely on the federal government or declining gas tax revenue will not only achieve financial stability, but allow for the expansion of service to meet the needs of a growing population that requires access to the affordable and sustainable travel option that public transit provides.

I urge you to support S2095 to increase revenue for RIPTA, giving Rhode Island residents better access to affordable transportation and providing sustainable funding for public transit to thrive.

Sincerely,

Madison Bertotto
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