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May 20, 2026

**To the Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee  
Rhode Island General Assembly  
State House, Providence, Rhode Island**

**RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S2680 – An Act Relating to Public Transportation  
Funding and Accountability**

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Dear Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Imani Stewart, and I am writing to express my strong support for S2680 to stop continued spending on the proposed relocation of the Kennedy Plaza bus hub.

At a time when RIPTA is already operating under significant financial strain, it is deeply concerning that public funds continue to be directed toward a project that lacks clear evidence, public support, or demonstrated benefit. RIPTA reportedly faces a funding gap of roughly \$5 million from what is needed to adequately operate the system, yet millions are being committed toward planning and consulting for a hub relocation that has not been justified through serious public evaluation.

There is still no compelling body of data demonstrating that moving the bus hub out of Kennedy Plaza would improve service for riders, increase efficiency, reduce travel burdens, or strengthen transit access. No serious, transparent government evaluation has shown that the proposed relocation site is superior to Kennedy Plaza. Riders themselves have not been meaningfully consulted on whether moving the hub is worthwhile, and when riders have had opportunities to weigh in, many have opposed the move.

It is difficult to justify spending hundreds of millions of dollars on a speculative relocation when the existing transit system remains underfunded. If Rhode Island can contemplate spending millions on consultants and potentially hundreds of millions on a relocation project, then Rhode Island can afford to fully fund RIPTA and address the system's existing operational deficiencies. Public transportation users deserve reliable service, frequency, maintenance, and investment in the network they use today before taxpayer dollars are committed to an expensive project with unclear benefits.

Kennedy Plaza remains centrally located and convenient for riders. Improving and renovating the existing hub would be a far more fiscally responsible path than advancing a costly move without sufficient evidence that it would improve outcomes for transit users.

S2680 is a reasonable step toward fiscal responsibility and public accountability. It prevents further spending on a project that has not demonstrated its value while preserving the possibility of a future proposal if clear evidence and public support ever justify it.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

**Imani Stewart**

Providence, RI