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From: Nick Rutter <nickrutter0@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 2, 2026 1:37 AM
To: Senate Finance
Subject: SUPPORT (S2825) - \$5 million Budget Allocation for RIPTA

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Dear Chair DiPalma and Committee members,

My name is Nick Rutter, I am a ten-year resident of Smithfield, and I am writing in support of Bill S2825, Sen. McKenney's \$5M allocation to reverse RIPTA's service cuts.

My most acute experience of these cuts was the elimination of Saturday/all weekend service for route 58; this line serves the Hospital District, the train station and two grocery stores while running through incredibly dense areas of Mineral Spring, and Branch and Douglas Avenues. Having weekend access to healthcare and food as well as employment is crucial, especially so for residents outside of the urban core who are already lacking for proximity, transit options and don't have the ability to fall back on alternative lines. Those who are forced to utilize alternative lines and longer wait times end up putting stress on the safety, reliability and comfort of RIPTA due to crowding, which is a key aspect of the Save RIPTA coalition's [report](#) on the effects of the 2025 cuts.

Other key points of this report include:

- A ridership drop of 12.1% or about 125,000 trips by November
- 30% of RIPTA riders at risk of losing employment, 8% who had lost pay, and 3.6% who lost their jobs directly
- RIPTA service has gotten 29% more expensive to operate per service hour

These findings, in my view, put the value of reinstating these cuts far above the five million that was "saved" on paper. RIPTA consistently demonstrates its value through continued resiliency despite systemic underfunding and undue scrutiny and indeed is a crucial component in the stated State plans for [economic development](#), [housing production](#), and [climate](#). To keep our state solvent and growing, we need to support and grow RIPTA, and the first step to do that is to restore it to full funding through S2825.

Sincerely,

Nick Rutter
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