



March 30th, 2026

The youth of Young Voices would like to voice their support of Bill S2825, which funds the RIPTA budget, and urge you to support the restoration of funding for RIPTA by undoing the 2025 service cuts.

Because RIPTA is Rhode Island's only mass transit authority, young people are uniquely dependent on buses as our main source of transportation. Within the last year, over 76,000 students used RIPTA to commute to high school and college. We are relying on you to support this bill to provide level funding for RIPTA at its current reduced size, and implore you to support increased funding to reverse the devastating service cuts from 2025. High quality public transportation in Rhode Island should be apparent, with our compact size and abundance of destinations, getting around the state by bus is something everyone should be able to do, and an obvious investment in a public good. Instead, we must continue returning to the State House and implore you to maintain the bare minimum funding to keep the system afloat. It's time to turn this vicious cycle into a virtuous one.

Many public school districts across the state do not support their own morning bus routes, and must offer free RIPTA passes to students instead. The cumulative effect of these cuts to RIPTA's budget presents an even greater challenge for those of us that cannot rely on any other form of transportation to get to and from school, and cannot afford the prohibitive expense of a personal vehicle or daily rideshares like Uber or Lyft. The lack of service during Rhode Island's winter months worsen our own public health and safety, as we must wait upwards to an hour on cold and poorly-lit roads for a simple bus ride home.

We are urging you to support the funding for RIPTA in the Governor's Budget, S2825 and to advocate for the restoration of funding that resulted in devastating service cuts this fall. Fully funding RIPTA is an investment in our youth. Please support this measure to get Rhode Island back on track and create a 21st century transit system that works for everyone.

Sincerely,

The Youth of Young Voices