

Dear Chair DiPalma and Committee members,

My name is Madison, I live in Providence, and I am writing in support of Bill S3013. 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.

It has been over 10 years since regular gas-powered car inspection fees were increased in Rhode Island, while we have added much higher taxes and fees to electric vehicles. We need to ensure we are not disproportionately allowing increases on some and not equitably across the board. We see our state struggling to provide an accessible public transit system and also our small businesses struggling financially, which both are great contributors to Rhode Island's economic successes. This bill will ensure both have more funding to ensure a better pathway to a more prosperous future.

As a transit rider and supporter, I am relying on you to support this simple solution for increasing revenue and ridership for RIPTA. Securing new and diverse 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 Senator Vargas' S3013, to increase revenue for RIPTA, while also helping the businesses receive an increase so that they can afford to perform inspections. This gives Rhode Island residents access to affordable transportation and provides sustainable funding for public transit to thrive.

Sincerely,

Madison Bertotto
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