

From: Archana Ramanujam <a.ramanujam@protonmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 4, 2026 12:04 PM
To: SLegislation <slegislation@rilegislature.gov>
Subject: Support for S2323

Dear Chair Burke and Honorable Members of the Committee,

My name is Archana Ramanujam, I live in Providence, RI and I am writing to express my support for Bill S2323. I am a PhD candidate at Brown University, and am therefore a student *and* employee and receive a transit pass from the university. It enables me to get to my campus easily multiple times a week in order to teach and do research. It also enables me to get to my health appointments in the hospital district, and generally get around town. This is especially in the case of bad weather or storms like we just had, where biking would also not be an option, and I don't have to worry about parking. **My transit pass lowers the barrier for me to take public transit, as I know I always have the option.** Multiple of my colleagues (staff, faculty and graduate students) take public transit regularly, and I see them on the bus. **The pass works - it encourages people to take transit.**

Requiring Rhode Island's largest employers to offer transit passes as a fringe benefit is a simple way to improve congestion, reduce emissions, and increase Rhode Island's competitiveness as a business-friendly destination.

According to the American Public Transportation Association, individuals who use public transit save an average of \$9,000 annually compared to those who drive. In Rhode Island, where traffic congestion is a growing concern, this savings would provide significant financial relief to workers while decreasing congestion for all road users. Offering transit passes would ensure that employees, especially those with lower incomes, can access more affordable transportation options, reducing the burden of expensive gas, parking, and car maintenance costs.

Rhode Island's largest 25 companies employ more than 100,000 people (Source: Providence Business News), yet very few offer transit passes to employees as a fringe benefit. If even a fraction of this population took transit, it would have a profound impact on RIPTA ridership, carbon emissions, and highway congestion. By providing employees with reliable and affordable transportation options, employers can attract and retain a more diverse and skilled talent pool, particularly from areas that may be underserved by car-dependent infrastructure.

As a transit rider and supporter, I am relying on you to support this simple solution for increasing ridership and fare revenue 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.

Please support S2323, to support workers and increase revenue for RIPTA, giving Rhode Island workers access to affordable transportation and growing the base of ridership for public transit.

Sincerely,

Archana Ramanujam

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