

THE CITY OF NEWPORT

**RESOLUTION  
OF THE  
COUNCIL**

**No.2025-85**

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY  
(RIPTA) AND CALLING FOR STATE ACTION TO ADDRESS RIPTA'S FUNDING  
NEEDS**

WHEREAS, the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) is a critical part of Rhode Island's infrastructure, providing essential transportation services that connect residents to work, school, medical appointments, grocery stores, and community activities; and

WHEREAS, public transportation plays a vital role in supporting the state's economy by enabling access to employment, education, and healthcare, and is especially crucial for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and families without access to private vehicles; and

WHEREAS, RIPTA has made significant progress over the past year by increasing driver recruitment, improving service reliability, launching innovative partnerships with employers, and recovering eighty percent of its pre-pandemic ridership despite widespread shifts to remote work; and

WHEREAS, RIPTA continues to maximize federal funding opportunities and implement operational efficiencies, including route adjustments and bringing services in-house, in order to manage costs responsibly; and

WHEREAS, despite these efforts, RIPTA faces a substantial structural budget deficit due to factors including rising costs and stagnant revenue streams such as the gas tax, which has not increased since 2010 and is in decline; and

WHEREAS, without additional investment or sustainable funding solutions, RIPTA will be forced to reduce service, cut programs, and eliminate hundreds of jobs, which would have devastating impacts on Rhode Island's residents, businesses, and overall economy; and

WHEREAS, the City of Newport, as a major tourist destination, relies heavily on RIPTA's services including the popular summer trolley route that supports the

hospitality and tourism industries, as well as year-round fixed-route service that provides vital transportation options for residents and visitors alike; and

WHEREAS, RIPTA's service at the new park-and-ride in Newport will help alleviate parking shortages and traffic congestion, especially in the city's historic downtown, preserving the character and accessibility of the community; and

WHEREAS, many service sector employees in Newport depend on reliable and affordable public transportation to reach their workplaces, making RIPTA an essential part of the city's economic and social fabric; and

WHEREAS, investing in RIPTA is an investment in Rhode Island's future economic growth and environmental sustainability; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the City Council of Newport urges the Governor and General Assembly to take immediate action to secure sustainable funding for RIPTA, through measures such as revising existing revenue streams and exploring new funding opportunities; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that the Newport City Council reaffirms its support for RIPTA's critical role in our community and commits to working with state and local leaders to strengthen and expand public transportation access for all Rhode Islanders; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution shall be sent to the Governor of Rhode Island, the President of the Rhode Island Senate, the Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives, and the members of the Rhode Island General Assembly representing the City of Newport.

XAY KHAMSYVORAVONG  
ELLEN PINNOCK  
STEPHANIE SMYTH  
JEANNE-MARIE NAPOLITANO

IN COUNCIL  
READ AND PASSED

**MAY 14, 2025**



LAURA C. SWISTAK, CMC  
CITY CLERK