



TO: House Finance Committee  
[HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov](mailto:HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov)

Dear Finance Committee Chair and Members:

RI Transit Riders opposes H7491, which authorizes the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority to “enter into certain projects and procure related services including the transit center project, using design build contracting and progressive design build contracting.”

RI Transit Riders’ main budget priorities remain those of providing adequate financial support to maintain RIPTA’s current service levels and providing the additional funding needed to implement the transit service improvements outlined in the 2020 state-approved [Transit Master Plan](#) (TMP).

Without hesitation, we place a much greater importance to financing the TMP than on creating a new transit hub facility. In the long run, the service improvements called for in the TMP provide the only real opportunity to increase ridership across the state, to help address our acute housing crisis, and to alleviate the worst effects of climate change.

Of the approximately \$20 million or less of the bus hub bond money yet unspent, the state will undoubtedly be required to spend considerably more money than that allocated in 2014 to build a new central hub, even if private developers will be assuming some of the costs. We recommend that the remaining hub money be spent on “enhancements and renovations to mass transit hub infrastructure throughout the State of Rhode Island to improve access to multiple intermodal sites, key transportation, healthcare, and other locations,” as specified in the original wording of the bond legislation that voters approved.

We urge the committee to reject H7491 and instead focus on providing RIPTA with the necessary funding to improve bus service across the state.

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Co-chair of RI Transit Riders

*[RI Transit Riders is an independent, grassroots group fighting to preserve, expand, and improve public transportation in Rhode Island.]*