

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS -- RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC
TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Introduced By: Representatives Tanzi, Cortvriend, Chippendale, Batista, Shanley,
Stewart, Kislak, Cruz, Hull, and Handy

Date Introduced: February 27, 2026

Referred To: House Corporations

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 39-18-2 of the General Laws in Chapter 39-18 entitled "Rhode Island
2 Public Transit Authority" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **39-18-2. Authority created — Composition — Terms — Oath — Officers —**
4 **Quorum— Compensation — Conflicts of interest.**

5 (a) There is hereby created a body corporate and politic to be known as the "Rhode Island
6 public transit authority" (hereinafter "RIPTA").

7 (b) The authority shall consist of ~~nine (9)~~ ten (10) members, one of whom shall be the
8 director of the department of transportation, or the director's designee, who shall serve as an ex
9 officio member, and ~~eight (8)~~ nine (9) of whom shall be appointed by the governor with the advice
10 and consent of the senate, with at least one of the ~~eight (8)~~ nine (9) being a regular user of fixed-
11 route RIPTA transportation and at least one of the ~~eight (8)~~ nine (9) being a person with a disability.

12 The governor shall achieve a diverse membership in the board and shall give due consideration to
13 recommendations for nominations from the RIPTA Riders Alliance, the National Federation of the
14 Blind of Rhode Island, the Gray Panthers of Rhode Island, the Sierra Club of Rhode Island, the
15 Rhode Island AFL-CIO, the RIPTA Transportation Advisory Committee, the Rhode Island
16 business community, the Amalgamated Transit Union, The Rhode Island Climate Community, and
17 the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns. No one shall be eligible for appointment unless he
18 or she is a resident of this state.

1 (c) Those members of the authority as of the effective date of this act [June 16, 2006] who
2 were appointed to the authority by members of the board of the general assembly shall cease to be
3 members of the authority on the effective date of this act [June 16, 2006], and the governor shall
4 thereupon nominate two (2) members, each of whom shall serve the balance of the unexpired term
5 of their predecessor. Those members of the authority as of the effective date of this act [June 16,
6 2006] who were appointed to the authority by the governor shall continue to serve the balance of
7 their current terms. Thereafter, during the month of January in each year, the governor shall appoint
8 members to succeed the departing members. The newly appointed members shall serve for a term
9 of three (3) years, commencing on the day they are qualified. In the event of a vacancy occurring
10 in the membership, the governor, with the advice and consent of the senate, shall appoint a member
11 for the unexpired term. Any member of the authority shall be eligible for reappointment.

12 (d) Each member of the authority, before entering upon the member's duties, shall take an
13 oath to administer the duties of the member's office faithfully and impartially, and the oath shall
14 be filed in the office of the secretary of state.

15 (e) The ~~director of the department of transportation shall serve~~ authority shall elect one of
16 its members as chairperson. The authority shall elect a secretary and such other officers as it deems
17 necessary.

18 (f) ~~Five (5)~~ Six (6) members of the authority shall constitute a quorum. The affirmative
19 vote of a majority of the members present and voting shall be necessary for any action taken by the
20 authority. No vacancy in the membership of the authority shall impair the right of a quorum to
21 exercise all the rights and perform all the duties of the authority.

22 (g) The members of the authority shall receive no compensation, but shall be reimbursed
23 for their actual expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of their duties.

24 (h) No member of the authority shall be in the employ of, or own any stock in, or be in any
25 way directly or indirectly pecuniarily interested in any railroad corporation, bus, or street railway
26 company; nor shall any member of the authority personally, or through a partner or agent, render
27 any professional service or make or perform any business contract with or for any company; nor
28 shall any member of the authority, directly or indirectly, receive a commission, bonus, discount,
29 present, or reward from any company.

30 (i) Members of the authority shall be removable by the governor pursuant to the provisions
31 of § 36-1-7 and for cause only, and removal solely for partisan or personal reasons unrelated to
32 capacity or fitness for the office shall be unlawful.

33 (j) The authority shall conduct a training course for newly appointed and qualified members
34 within six (6) months of their qualification or designation. The course shall be developed by the

1 general manager of the authority, be approved by the authority, and be conducted by the general
2 manager of the authority. The authority may approve the use of any authority and/or staff members
3 and/or individuals to assist with training. The training course shall include instruction in the
4 following areas: the provisions of chapter 46 of title 42, chapter 14 of title 36, and chapter 2 of title
5 38; and the authority's rules and regulations. The director of the department of administration shall
6 be responsible for the enforcement of the provisions of this subsection.

7 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect on July 1, 2026.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS -- RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC
TRANSIT AUTHORITY

1 This act would amend the Rhode Island Transit Authority (RIPTA) board composition by
2 adding the Rhode Island Climate Community to the groups given due consideration for
3 appointment to the board.

4 This act would take effect on July 1, 2026.

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