



April 11, 2024

His Excellency Daniel J. McKee
Governor of the State of Rhode Island
222 State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Governor McKee:

I write to you today to tender my resignation as the Chief Executive Officer of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA), and to ask that the RIPTA Board of Directors, meeting in Executive Session later today, terminate my contract.

I came to RIPTA first as a board member and later Chairman of the Board during the administration of former Governor Lincoln Chafee and enjoyed interacting with the board and staff of the agency. In June of 2018, I returned to RIPTA as the Chief Executive Officer under the administration of former Governor and now Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo.

It has been a distinct honor and pleasure for me to work with the dedicated RIPTA staff. Day in and day out they help move a million passengers a month to connect with school, work, and life. During the COVID pandemic, they did not have the option to work from home. We never cut service and we delivered people to vaccination appointments, doctor's visits, and more. And our drivers delivered more than 37,000 meals and made 15,365 trips to Honeywell to get people to work making necessary masks and PPP.

Since June of 2018, RIPTA has made a series of improvements. Most notably:

Electric Bus In-Line Charging Station

The Electric Bus In-Line Charging Station project is part of Rhode Island's Zero Emissions Fleet Transition, utilizing Volkswagen settlement funds to improve air quality and introduce electric buses to RIPTA's fleet. This cutting-edge charging station, located along the R-Line – RIPTA's most frequently-used route connecting Providence, Cranston and Pawtucket – can charge up to four electric buses simultaneously while they are in service. The charging station, the first of its kind in the northeast region, also features driver restrooms and other site enhancements such as an on-site snow-melt system. With construction now complete, the charging station will power RIPTA's first electric fleet – fourteen (14) New Flyer Xcelisior XE40 battery electric buses, all of which will exclusively serve the R-Line.

Downtown Transit Connector (DTC)

June 2021 saw the formal service launch of the Downtown Transit Connector (DTC), a \$17 million project which created a high-frequency bus corridor running from Providence Station to Rhode Island Hospital through the Jewelry District. Six different RIPTA routes are funneled through the corridor to give passengers five-minute bus frequency in both directions run between the six paired stops. Each stop features shelters, real-time information screens, and other passenger amenities.

John H. Chafee Maintenance Center

RIPTA made headway on improving its transit infrastructure at the John H. Chafee Maintenance & Operations Center, where buses and state highway trucks are repaired and maintained. RIPTA has invested in some much-needed maintenance on the 95,000 square foot building itself. The HVAC system

was upgraded, part of the roof was replaced, and the fire alarm and CO detection systems were upgraded as well. This roughly \$6 million project was supported by Federal Transit Administration and Rhode Island Capital Plan Funding. 2023 saw the continued replacement of remaining vehicle lifts in the Chafee building. By the end of 2024 all lifts will have either been replaced or completely rebuilt.

The facility is named in honor of the late John H. Chafee – former Governor, U.S. Senator, and Secretary of the Navy – who created RIPTA during his tenure as Governor.

Hop-on Hop-off Newport

The success of the summer-long free Hop-On-Hop-Off bus service in Newport has been instrumental in reducing traffic congestion, prompting the decision to implement this partnership for another season. Launched at the beginning of summer, the promotion - funded by Discover Newport and the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island - not only creatively alleviated summer traffic in Newport but also provided vital connections for residents. With routes granting access to local beaches and stops at essential locations like the Rhode Island Department of Human Services offices, Newport County YMCA, and Newport Mental Health, the initiative proved to be a strategic solution. RIPTA recorded 153,386 passenger trips on Route 67 between May 26 and October 31, 2023. On Route 68, 15,462 passenger trips were recorded between June 17 and October 31, 2023. We're happy to announce that this partnership will be renewed for a third season in 2024.

Pawtucket-Central Falls Transit Center

This past year, RIPTA made significant strides in enhancing Rhode Island's transit infrastructure. The Pawtucket-Central Falls Transit Center, operational since January 23, 2023, marks the strategic move of RIPTA's Pawtucket transit hub to connect passengers with rail. RIPTA officially moved its Pawtucket transit hub from Main Street and Roosevelt Avenue to the new intermodal transit center at 300 Pine Street, improving connection options for passengers. RIPTA recorded 97,916 passenger boardings here in 2023. The state allotted \$5 million for RIPTA to develop a new passenger facility at this site. The proposed facility will include restrooms for passengers and employees, a sheltered waiting space for passengers, and a RIPTA customer service presence. And Mayor Donald Grebien has committed to have a police substation on site.

Pension Payable

For years RIPTA had not been making its required annual pension contributions and had fallen behind by \$10.5 million. Today, that has been paid as well as all of the yearly contributions.

Regrettably, all of these initiatives are now being overshadowed by recent events. I regret that the good work of the employees is being detracted by my actions. Therefore, I respectfully submit my resignation and ask that the Board of Directors terminate my contract.

Finally, many thanks for the years of friendship that we have enjoyed. I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,



Scott Avedisian
Chief Executive Officer

Cc: Director Peter Alviti, Chairman
Members of the Board of Directors