



Public Testimony
House Finance Committee
House Bill 7937 (Protecting RIPTA Senior/Disabled No-Fare Pass)
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Submitted by The Rhode Island Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty

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The Rhode Island Interfaith Coalition to Reduce Poverty is a coalition of diverse religious communities and advocacy partners throughout the state who have come together to fight poverty.

Today, we are writing to voice our organization's strong support of House Bill 7937.

We have previously testified before this committee to oppose cuts to RIPTA's senior/disabled no-fare program. The key issue is this: many people with disabilities and senior citizens living in poverty rely on the senior/disabled no-fare program for basic transportation needs. The senior/disabled no-fare pass allows access to transportation for the essentials of daily life, such as buying groceries, accessing community centers, visiting family or friends, getting to overnight shelters, participating in recovery meetings, and attending religious services if they so choose. Many of these Rhode Islanders have very low-incomes or no incomes at all. The elimination of this program would create a substantive barrier to transportation for many of those in our state who are already most impoverished and at high risk for social isolation.

We encourage you to pass House Bill 7937 to address this issue and protect transportation access for low-income seniors and people with abilities.

Thank you for your time and for your service to this committee.