

PRIORITIZE EQUITABLE REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSIT

Please cosponsor Amendments #885 & #886 by Sen. Chandler to fund line-item 1595-6370 at \$103.5M

In order for RTAs to maintain service, address the driver shortage, and make service affordable for riders, the Senate must ensure \$103.5 mill in line item 1595-6370 for RTAs in the FY23 budget.

55% of MA residents live in an RTA service area, but a fraction are served.



Cities and towns within RTA service areas that rely more heavily on the RTA have a higher proportion of Black and Latine residents.

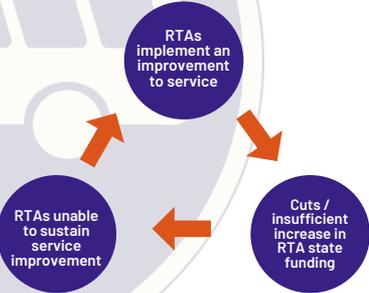


People who rely on RTA services are disproportionately:

- o Lower-income
- o Older
- o Without a car
- o Disabled

The legislature is accountable to transit users in 250+ cities and towns beyond the reach of the MBTA.

- RTAs rely upon state operating funds to run fixed-route buses and paratransit services (on-demand rides for people with disabilities and/or older adults).
- When state funding does not keep pace with inflation, RTAs are challenged to keep up with operating costs, and cannot match service to rider needs.



RTA communities deserve public transportation that is reliable and affordable.

- Federal relief and recovery packages are one-time funds, not a sustainable source of revenue that can be used to maintain and improve service.
- Fare revenue makes up a small portion of most RTA budgets, and can be a burden to riders, who are primarily low-income in RTA communities.
- Current and future RTA riders are relying on the Senate to increase funds for RTA operating assistance and provide grants for flexible fare pilot programs that can be evaluated for impact.

RTA communities request \$103.5 million in FY23 to:

- *Maintain service.* The cost of fuel, insurance, parts, etc. rises annually. The RTA budget must increase annually to ensure financial stability.
- *Hire drivers.* The driver shortage has led to reduced service across RTA systems. Communities need funding for workforce recruitment and retention initiatives.
- *Increase affordability.* Free and reduced fares increase ridership and benefit local economies. Fare pilots funded through the budget should be flexible and measurable.

Questions? Contact the RTA Advocates Coalition

Alexis Walls, MA Public Health Association, awalls@mapublichealth.org/410-935-9819

Elise Mason, Transportation for MA, emason@t4ma.org/413-887-8772