ARTICLE 22 AS AMENDED

ARTICLE ______

RELATING TO PUBLIC TRANSIT

SECTION 1. Section 39-18-4 of the General Laws in Chapter 39-18 entitled "Rhode Island Public Transit Authority" is hereby amended to read as follows:

39-18-4. Powers and duties of the authority. -- (a) The authority is hereby authorized and empowered:

(1) To adopt bylaws for the regulation of its affairs and the conduct of its business;

(2) To adopt an official seal and alter the seal at pleasure;

(3) To maintain an office at such place or places within the state as it may designate;

(4) To sue and be sued in its own name, plead and to be implead; provided, however, that any and all actions against the authority shall be brought only in the county in which the principal office of the authority shall be located;

(5) To acquire, purchase, hold, use, and dispose of any property, real, personal, or mixed, tangible or intangible, or any interest therein necessary or desirable for carrying out the purposes of the authority, and, to lease as lessee or lessor any property, real, personal or mixed, or any interest therein for such term and at such rental as the authority may deem fair and reasonable, and to sell, transfer, convey, mortgage, or give a security interest in any property, real, personal, or mixed, tangible or intangible, or any interest therein, at any time acquired by the authority;

(6) To employ, in its discretion, planning, architectural, and engineering consultants, attorneys, accountants, construction, financial, transportation, and traffic experts and consultants, superintendents, managers, and such other officers, employees, and agents as may be necessary in its judgment, and to fix their compensation;

(7) (i) To fix from time to time, subject to the provisions of this chapter, schedules and such rates of fare and charges for service furnished or operated as in its judgment are best adopted to insure sufficient income to meet the cost of service; provided, however, the authority is not empowered to operate a passenger vehicle under its control in competition with passenger vehicles of a private carrier over routes which the private carrier operates pursuant to a certificate of public convenience and necessity issued to the private carrier by the division of public utilities and carriers; and provided further that the authority shall not require any person who meets the means test criteria as defined by the Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs and who is either sixty-five (65) years of age, or over, or who is disabled to pay no more than one-half (1/2)
of any fare or charge for bus rides during peak hours; provided, however, that such exclusion for
any fare or charge shall not apply: (A) to special service routes be
discounted and (B) during periods and routes of overcrowded conditions. Any person who is
either sixty-five (65) years of age, or over, or who is disabled, and who meets the means test
criteria as heretofore provided, shall not be required to pay any fare or charge for bus rides during
off-peak hours, and any person who is either sixty-five (65) years of age, or over, or who is
disabled, and who does not satisfy the means test criteria as heretofore provided, shall only be
required to pay one-half (1/2) of the fare or charge for bus rides during off-peak hours, but shall
not be eligible for a reduction during peak hours. For the purposes of this chapter, "overcrowded
conditions," "peak hours," "off-peak hours" and "special service routes" shall be determined
annually by the authority. The authority, in conjunction with the department of human services,
shall establish an advisory committee comprised of seniors/persons with disabilities constituent
users of the authority's services to assist in the implementation of this section;
(ii) Any person who accompanies and is assisting a person with a disability when the
person with a disability uses a wheelchair shall be eligible for the same price exemptions
extended to a person with a disability by subsection (7)(i). The cost to the authority for providing
the service to the elderly shall be paid by the state;
(iii) Any person who accompanies and is assisting a passenger who is blind or visually
impaired shall be eligible for the same price exemptions extended to the passenger who is blind or
visually impaired by subsection (7)(i). The cost to the authority for providing the service to the
elderly shall be paid by the state;
(iv) The authority shall be authorized and empowered to charge a fare for any paratransit
services required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq., in
accordance with 49 C.F.R. Part 37.
(8) To borrow money and to issue bonds of the authority for any of its purposes
including, without limitation, the borrowing of money in anticipation of the issuance of bonds or
the receipt of any operating revenues or other funds or property to be received by the authority,
and the financing of property to be owned by others and used, in whole or substantial part, by the
authority for any of its purposes, all as may from time to time, be authorized by resolution of the
authority; the bonds to contain on their face a statement to the effect that neither the state nor any
municipality or other political subdivision of the state shall be obligated to pay the same or the
interest thereon;
(9) To enter into management contracts for the operation, management, and supervision
of any or all transit properties under the jurisdiction of the authority, and to make and enter into
all contracts and agreements necessary or incidental to the performance of its duties and the
execution of its powers under this chapter;

(10) Without limitation of the foregoing, to borrow money from, to receive and accept
grants for or in aid of the purchase, leasing, improving, equipping, furnishing, maintaining,
repairing, constructing, and operating of transit property, and to enter into contracts, leases, or
other transactions with any federal agency; and to receive and accept from the state, from any
municipality, or other political subdivision thereof, and from any other source, aid or
contributions of either money, property, labor, or other things of value, to be held, used and
applied only for the purposes for which the grants and contributions may be made;

(11) To acquire in the name of the authority, by negotiated purchase or otherwise, on
such terms and conditions and in such manner as it may deem proper, or by the exercise of the
power of condemnation to the extent only and in the manner as provided in this chapter, such
public and private lands, including public parks, playgrounds or reservations, or parts thereof, or
rights therein, rights-of-way, property rights, easements, and interests as it may deem necessary
for carrying out the provisions of this chapter; provided, however, that all public property
damaged in carrying out the powers granted by this chapter shall be restored or repaired and
placed in its original condition as nearly as practicable;

(12) To contract with any municipality, public or private company or organization,
whereby the authority will receive a subsidy to avoid discontinuance of service, and each
municipality within the state is hereby authorized to make and enter into such contracts and to
make, grant, or give to the authority a subsidy in such amount and for such period of time as it
may deem advisable;

(13) To operate service to nearby Massachusetts and nearby Connecticut terminals for
the purpose of deboarding Rhode Island passengers at major traffic generating locations for the
benefit of passengers and to board Rhode Islanders for the return trip, provided, however, that the
authority operate closed door in Massachusetts and nearby Connecticut to and from its
destination; and

(14) To do all things necessary, convenient, or desirable to carry out the purpose of this
chapter.

(b) To effectuate the purposes of this chapter the authority shall have the following
duties:

(1) To participate in and contribute to transportation planning initiatives that are relevant
to the purposes of the authority;

(2) To plan, coordinate, develop, operate, maintain and manage a statewide public transit
system consistent with the purposes of the authority, including plans to meet demands for public transit where such demand, current or prospective, exceeds supply and/or availability of public transit services;

(3) To work with departments, agencies, authorities and corporations of federal, state and local government, public and private institutions, businesses, non-profit organization, users of the system and other entities and persons to coordinate public transit services and provide a seamless network of mobility options.

SECTION 2. This article shall take effect October 1, 2015.