

2015 -- H 5833

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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A N A C T

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

Introduced By: Representatives Malik, McNamara, Hull, Azzinaro, and Corvese

Date Introduced: March 11, 2015

Referred To: House Finance

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

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

3 **39-18-4. Powers and duties of the authority.** -- (a) The authority is hereby authorized
4 and empowered:

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

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

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

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

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

17 (6) To employ, in its discretion, planning, architectural, and engineering consultants,
18 attorneys, accountants, construction, financial, transportation, and traffic experts and consultants,

1 superintendents, managers, and such other officers, employees, and agents as may be necessary in
2 its judgment, and to fix their compensation;

3 (7) (i) To fix from time to time, subject to the provisions of this chapter, schedules and
4 such rates of fare and charges for service furnished or operated as in its judgment are best adopted
5 to insure sufficient income to meet the cost of service; provided, however, the authority is not
6 empowered to operate a passenger vehicle under its control in competition with passenger
7 vehicles of a private carrier over routes which the private carrier operates pursuant to a certificate
8 of public convenience and necessity issued to the private carrier by the division of public utilities
9 and carriers; and provided further that the authority shall not require any person who meets the
10 means test criteria as defined by the Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs and who is
11 either sixty-five (65) years of age, or over, or who is disabled, or any person who has served in
12 the military, naval or air service of the United States and who has been honorably discharged
13 therefrom, to pay any fare or charge for bus rides during peak hours; provided, however, that such
14 exclusion for fares or charges shall not apply: (A) to special service routes and (B) during periods
15 and routes of overcrowded conditions. Any person who is either sixty-five (65) years of age, or
16 over, or who is disabled, and who meets the means test criteria as heretofore provided, or any
17 person who has served in the military, naval or air service of the United States and who has been
18 honorably discharged therefrom, shall not be required to pay any fare or charge for bus rides
19 during off-peak hours, and any person who is either sixty-five (65) years of age, or over, or who
20 is disabled, and who does not satisfy the means test criteria as heretofore provided, shall only be
21 required to pay one-half (1/2) of the fare or charge for bus rides during off-peak hours. For the
22 purposes of this chapter, "overcrowded conditions," "peak hours," "off-peak hours" and "special
23 service routes" shall be determined annually by the authority. The authority shall establish an
24 advisory committee comprised of seniors/persons with disabilities constituent users of the
25 authority's services to assist in the implementation of this section;

26 (ii) Any person who accompanies and is assisting a person with a disability when the
27 person with a disability uses a wheelchair shall be eligible for the same price exemptions
28 extended to a person with a disability by subsection (7)(i). The cost to the authority for providing
29 the service to the elderly shall be paid by the state;

30 (iii) Any person who accompanies and is assisting a passenger who is blind or visually
31 impaired shall be eligible for the same price exemptions extended to the passenger who is blind or
32 visually impaired by subsection (7)(i). The cost to the authority for providing the service to the
33 elderly shall be paid by the state;

34 (iv) The authority shall be authorized and empowered to charge a fare for any paratransit

1 services required by the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq., in
2 accordance with 49 C.F.R. Part 37.

3 (8) To borrow money and to issue bonds of the authority for any of its purposes
4 including, without limitation, the borrowing of money in anticipation of the issuance of bonds or
5 the receipt of any operating revenues or other funds or property to be received by the authority,
6 and the financing of property to be owned by others and used, in whole or substantial part, by the
7 authority for any of its purposes, all as may from time to time, be authorized by resolution of the
8 authority; the bonds to contain on their face a statement to the effect that neither the state nor any
9 municipality or other political subdivision of the state shall be obligated to pay the same or the
10 interest thereon;

11 (9) To enter into management contracts for the operation, management, and supervision
12 of any or all transit properties under the jurisdiction of the authority, and to make and enter into
13 all contracts and agreements necessary or incidental to the performance of its duties and the
14 execution of its powers under this chapter;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

20 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF

A N A C T

RELATING TO PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS -- RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC
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- 1 This act would provide honorably discharged veterans with free RIPTA service.
- 2 This act would take effect upon passage.

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