

4641 Yates Road
Bensalem, PA 19020

February 12, 2006

Mr. David Hughes, Acting President
National Railroad Passenger Corporation
60 Massachusetts Avenue, NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Hughes:

I am writing to you to ask for your last-minute intervention in preventing Amtrak from completing, on February 16th, its financial destruction of the commuting communities it has spent decades building. On Thursday of this week, Amtrak intends to raise the price of its monthly passes by nearly 25%, making its total one-year increase in commuting fares about 77%. For perhaps half or more of the Amtrak commuters, this is equivalent to a pay cut of \$9,000 or more. This is wrong on so many levels, it's hard to count. Please see the arguments against the increase and my attempts to get the Board of Directors to back it down at www.savecornwellsheights.com.

As I am sure you must be aware, Amtrak's current federal subsidy package as enacted by Congress in H.R. 3058 (Public Law No: 109-115) states as follows in the final clause of the section entitled "OPERATING SUBSIDY GRANTS TO THE NATIONAL RAILROAD PASSENGER CORPORATION":

"Provided further, That none of the funds provided in this Act may be used after March 1, 2006, to support any route on which Amtrak offers a discounted fare of more than 50 percent off the normal, peak fare."

By the letter of the law, this means that the "Weekly Specials" which usually offer 70% discounts on selected routes will trigger federal subsidy shutoffs on those routes. Likewise, after March 1 Amtrak will no longer legally be able to offer 50% discounts on children's fares on any but peak price trains without forfeiting subsidies. As of today, it still states on the Amtrak website that groups of 6 can purchase tickets at an effective average discount of 60% off full fare (which could end up being about 70% or more off peak fares on some routes) and continue to do so through the end of March. I wish to alert you that this, too, if offered on or after March 1, will trigger the legal cutoff of Amtrak's federal subsidies.

This unfortunate piece of micro-management legislation, I have been told, was inserted into Amtrak's funding package for the sole purpose of legally forcing roughly a 70% increase in the cost of Amtrak monthly passes used by job commuters. Unfortunately, the language of the law also strikes children, those purchasing tickets in bulk, and Amtrak's own ability to promote its services with special discounts used to nourish ridership growth. I was told that the language that did this was only made visible to

members of Congress when the bill came back from the Government Printing Office about three hours before it went to vote, and virtually no one who voted on it knew the language was in there, or what its effects would be.

If I detect on Thursday morning that Amtrak has chosen to selectively implement the legislated fare increase against commuters while flouting the law with respect to special promotional fares, children's fares, and group fares (or even discount rates granted on non-peak travel which exceed the 50% threshold), **I will seek legal injunction for the enforcement of H.R. 3058 to shut down all of Amtrak's route subsidies beginning March 1st**. If you choose to spare the job commuters along with the children, I will back you up to the hilt in a Washington fight to keep your subsidies, and punish the flaming idiots who wrote the law in the first place.

I regret that I have to threaten Amtrak with legal action in this way, but extraordinary injustice requires extraordinary measures to be taken in its opposition. The Board of Directors has been nothing if not arrogant and cowardly in its attempts to ignore me on this issue since the beginning of January. Accordingly, I have filed an application with President George W. Bush requesting that he nominate me for a position on the Amtrak Board of Directors. Please see the application cover letter, my 22-plank platform, and the letters I sent to each and every member of the Board of Directors in early January without receiving so much as a single response. Other than not having given many thousands of dollars to the Republican Party, I believe I am at least as qualified to serve on the Board of Directors as are the majority of its current members, and three seats still need to be filled.

I would like to discuss these matters with you further as soon as possible, preferably face-to-face in Washington this week before Thursday. I can generally be there on one day's notice or by 9 p.m. the same day on train 193 at Union Station, should you prefer an evening meeting.

This is extremely important to Amtrak's 2,000 most loyal riders. If you choose to hurt them on Thursday, I will do everything I can to turn this into a national referendum on patronage Amtrak appointments, the publicly documented cowardice of the members of the Board, and the Bush administration's abuse of power. None of this will look good in November. Again, I apologize that this letter must be written in such a hostile tone. I hope that the next will be written in thanks, gratitude, and the hope that we may work well together if and when I sit on the Board.

Best regards, and please call my cell at 215-837-6557 if you are willing to meet.

Sincerely yours,

Rick Booth