

4641 Yates Road  
Bensalem, PA 19020

January 4, 2006

Mr. Jeffrey A. Rosen, General Counsel  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
400 7th Street, S.W.  
Washington D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Rosen:

Enclosed please find copies of materials I have sent to Mr. David Laney, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Amtrak, regarding the need to take emergency action before February 16 to prevent a great wrong from being done to Amtrak's 2,000 monthly pass commuters. I have also enclosed a copy of the letter, similar to this one, which I sent to Secretary Mineta in like regard.

I would very much like to speak with you in person, at your earliest convenience, regarding the issues involved. I can meet with you pretty much anywhere, but Washington, New York, or Philadelphia may be the most convenient locations.

My sympathies were very much with you as I watched you being grilled for a "simple 'yes' or 'no'" before the House Rail Subcommittee investigating the firing of David Gunn. Would that you could have countered with a question like, "Have you stopped taking money from Jack Abramoff? 'Yes' or 'no.'" So much for the humor.

Though what I've sent to Mr. Laney may seem at points strongly worded and even hostile about one skinny millimeter beneath the surface, I'm not out to hurt anyone. I took the high ground at [www.understandingamtrak.com](http://www.understandingamtrak.com) and wrote quite forcefully and truthfully to Mr. Laney to get the necessary attention for the plight of the Amtrak commuters who have been hurt so very badly. To be clear, if nothing is done to help them, and Amtrak continues to prevaricate and trot out its spokesweasels to justify what it has done, I'll be throwing everything I've got into cranking up the pressure via press, Internet, alliances, and direct contact with members of Congress. (The secret of winning, you know, is to first know clearly that you are in the right, and then to keep fighting until the other guy gives in. "Firstest with the mostest" helps, too.) Some folks might not like me as much afterwards, if it comes to that. But that's not what I want. I surely hope it doesn't have to go that far. I have absolutely nothing against you personally, and I marvel and often say a prayer of thanks that people with credentials as distinguished as yours are willing to take so incredibly much crap for government pay. I don't know if I have spoken softly enough about my big stick, but I wish to make clear to you that it is my hope to continue to speak softly and to never use my big stick unfairly.

What I would really like to get out of all of this, after settling the commuter issue, is the opportunity to continue to participate in Amtrak affairs and actually *help* the Board of Directors and Amtrak and the general cause of passenger rail. I've thoroughly enjoyed

learning about railroading, Amtrak, Washington politics, and what it takes to get things done on the banks of the Potomac. With the website I established to save my Amtrak station in Pennsylvania, plus the surrounding press coverage, I've found myself talking with everyone from mechanics to engineers (train drivers) to union leaders to David Gunn to conductors to train traffic controllers to more engineers (the Acela builders) to anonymous voices that send me unsigned e-mails from parts unknown. (I get treated, frankly, a bit like Robin Hood.) I would very much like to speak to you, too. Amtrak definitely needs fixed, and I think there are a lot of things I could bring to the party. Besides being fairly intelligent and interested in rail affairs, I'm told I have an unusually good ability to communicate thoughts, explain things clearly, and persuade in writing. At age 50, I'm getting a kick out of the idea that maybe in a little part of Washington I could actually do some democratic good.

By way of sharing some good news with you, I was glad to be informed that earlier today I was appointed the Bucks County, PA, citizen representative to SEPTA for rail issues. The position pays nothing and means I'll have to keep understanding not only Amtrak but my regional commuter passenger rail system as well, and that's just fine with me. (One of my first goals will be to get SEPTA to label the 10 unmarked Amtrak connection points it has kept ever "yearning to breathe free" on its route maps, the absence of which has led most Philadelphians to believe that the only place they could pick up an Amtrak train was 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station. You can't ride a train if you can't find it, I say. ;-)

I would very much like to request a meeting with you at your earliest convenience.

Best regards for a happy and prosperous new year.

Sincerely yours,

Rick Booth

cell: 215-837-6557

e-mail: [rick@savecornwellsheights.com](mailto:rick@savecornwellsheights.com)

P.S. Thanks again for serving your country and putting up with the slings and arrows of outrageous questioning for government pay. Whatever your politics and fealties, I respect your simple act of going to work.