

Comment on Docket # EP-726-0
Calvin J Frye, 367 North Prospect St, Oberlin, OH 44074
Surface Transportation Board
Good Folks,

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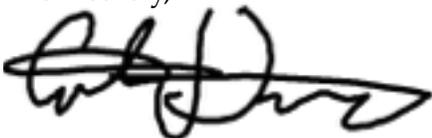
I routinely ride Amtrak for both business and pleasure trips. Often I find the conferences I attend are scheduled at downtown hotels in cities like Minneapolis, Denver, St. Louis, and yes, Washington DC. For most of these locations, the train station is much more conveniently located than the regional airport. Indeed, I usually walk the couple blocks from the station to my hotel, but light rail like the Metro is a convenient alternative.

My local Amtrak station is in Elyria, Ohio, a fifteen minute drive from my home. This is about the only advantage to this station. The facilities have improved recently; the former scary and dilapidated double-wide station has been replaced with a glass-enclosed "bus stop" style shelter and a bench. The parking lot is a notoriously bad place to leave one's car overnight. My wife is not comfortable waiting alone in her car at the station for me to return from a trip, and usually brings a friend for safety.

Why is this station troublesome? Because we are located halfway between the termini of Chicago and either New York or Washington, trains depart Elyria station at 3:29am or 4:18 am westbound, and 1:15am to Washington or 4:51am to New York. These aren't really times to be loitering around comfortably. Even so, last year, nearly seven thousand passengers began or ended their Amtrak trips at Elyria station. The local Amish folks I find are often using this train for keeping in touch with their families in other Amish communities. They have more interesting challenges arriving at the station for a delayed arrival.

On-time performance is important to us out here in the Midwest. We're in-between on every rail line. We're interested in whether our train pulls into Chicago on time, yes, but it's awfully important for that train to also reach Elyria pretty close to the schedule as well. 15 minutes would be good, but within 10 minutes even better. Our transportation choices away from Cleveland are limited. Please help Amtrak maintain its preference over freight traffic and keep it from being bullied by the host railroads whose tracks Amtrak must use. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Calvin J. Frye". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large initial "C" and "F".

Cal Frye