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## Residents on board for Amtrak service

By [Alexi Howk](#)

Posted May 1, 2010 at 4:28 p.m.

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**Crowds turn out for Amtrak test run**  
Starting in Miami on Saturday morning, the Amtrak train carried local and stat...

Dozens of Treasure Coast residents lined up at stops along the Florida East Coast Railway Saturday to get a special glimpse of an Amtrak train carrying passengers through the area for the first time since 1968.

The 351-mile trip from Miami to Jacksonville, with stops in Stuart, Fort Pierce and Vero Beach, was to review the feasibility of restoring rail service on the FEC Railway. Those on the invite-only trip included state and local elected officials, community leaders,

members of the media, top representatives from the railway and Amtrak, including Amtrak Board Chairman Tom Carper.

The train, consisting of three coach cars, a dome car and a first-class business car, made its first Treasure Coast stop at Second Street and St. Lucie Avenue in Stuart on time and ahead of its 11:35 a.m. scheduled arrival. As the train pulled up, people lined up along the tracks waved and a brass band set up near the tracks played music.

Amtrak spokeswoman Karina Romero said it was the largest show of support officials had seen since their morning departure from Miami, which included a 30-minute tour of the train by Gov. Charlie Crist.

"The area needs transportation badly," said Hobe Sound resident George Reiss, who showed up with his wife, Mary, to watch the train roll through Stuart. "People



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PHOTO BY ERIC HASERT, ERIC.HASERT@SCRIPPS.COM

Michael Busha, executive director of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, and his wife Pam, commissioner of the town of Sewall's Point, enjoy the ride and view of the upper deck of a domed passenger car while riding on the Amtrak train through St. Lucie County between the stops at Stuart and Fort Pierce. "Love it. Like to see it happen on a regular basis," Michael Busha said about the trip. "Got to get passengers back on the FEC again. This is great." The train was enroute from Miami to Jacksonville with stops in Stuart, Fort Pierce and Vero

Beach for a feasibility review of passenger rail service from Jacksonville to Miami.



PHOTO BY ERIC HASERT

Dozens of train fans gather to watch the arrival of the Amtrak train as it arrives to downtown Stuart at Second Street and St. Lucie Boulevard during its tour from Miami to Jacksonville.



PHOTO BY ERIC HASERT, ERIC HASERT@ERIC.HASERT@SCRIPPS.COM

Adele King, left, of Fort Pierce, and Terry Torres, of Vero Beach, share thoughts while welcoming the Amtrak train at its stop along Avenue A in Downtown Fort Pierce. More than a hundred supporters held signs and waved in support of passenger rail service for the east coast of Florida.



PHOTO BY ERIC HASERT, ERIC HASERT@ERIC.HASERT@SCRIPPS.COM

Train fan Jackson Talmadge, 5, of Sebastian, sits atop his dad John Talmadge while viewing the Amtrak train at its stop at 23rd Street in Vero Beach. The junior Talmadge made his own 'Please let the train come to Vero' sign on a blue piece of colored stationary to welcome the train.

seem addicted to four-lane country roads. We have ridden Amtrak a number of times and were very pleased with the service."

The Reiss' said if Amtrak got approval to run along Florida's east coast they'd use it to visit their daughter in Hollywood.

"I think it's a great opportunity and, if we're fortunate to get one, I think everyone will love it," said Martin County Commissioner Ed Ciampi, who boarded the train with this 8-year-old son, Nicholas. "Part of the fun is taking the train."

Officials from the Florida Department of Transportation have been working with local governments, regional planning councils and Rail America, owners of the FEC Railway, on a \$268 million application for federal stimulus money to reintroduce passenger rail by Amtrak between Jacksonville and Miami. It would be the first time passenger rail has operated on the FEC Railway since 1968.

Proponents say passengers could get from Jacksonville to Miami in about six hours on trains with a maximum speed of 90 mph. Saturday's journey was projected to take nine hours at a top speed of 60 mph. Since the train was ahead of schedule, it traveled at 45 mph as it came through the Treasure Coast, Romero said.

Carper said Saturday's trip was the first critical step to making passenger rail service a reality.

"It's up to Tallahassee," he said.

Carper said it could take at least seven years before the service could be reintroduced along the FEC tracks and possibly two years at the very minimum. He said it's been a grassroots effort and Saturday's warm reception was great.

"When you see that number of people showing up excited about restoring service, I think it's a good sign," he said.

As the train stopped at Avenue A in Fort Pierce, which had an even larger crowd of supporters than Stuart and Vero Beach, two men on horseback sounded off their rifles. A few rail opponents from Port St. Lucie also were among the crowd in Fort Pierce to protest Amtrak's rail subsidies.

Fort Pierce resident Andrew Marsh brought his two children, Jessica, 9, and Preston, 7, in support of Amtrak service.

"Hopefully they'll make this a stop," Marsh said, adding he'd like to use the service to visit theme parks in Orlando.

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Treasure Coast Crime Stopper...



3 arrested in 'cat coffin' case

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<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	
THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	MORE

**Eric Carle & Friends** 10 a.m.  
Agnes Wahlstrom Youth Playhouse

**Massage & Fitness Professional to Address REALTORS** 11:30 a.m.  
Piper's Landing Yacht and Country Club

**Free Cholesterol and Diabetes Screening** noon  
Winn Dixie Pharmacy, 281 S W Port St Lucie Blvd, Port St Lucie

**Zumba Gold** 5:30 p.m.  
Port Salerno Civic Center 4950 SE Anchor Ave. Stuart

**Team in Training Information Meeting** 6 p.m.  
Self-Storage Wine Storage/Wine Tasting, 11010 North Military Trail Palm Beach Gardens

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Sebastian residents Christian and John Talmadge, brought their 3-month-old son, Cullen, and son Jackson, 5, to see the train pass through Vero Beach at 23rd Street. Jackson, decked out in a train conductor suit, held a poster he made saying, "Please let the train come to Vero."

"It was pretty fun," Jackson said of seeing the train come through. "I loved all of it, especially the big seat."

Vero Beach resident Tom Rhodes and his son, Colin, 10, live near the tracks and said they'd like to ride the train to visit family in Winter Park.

"The only time I was on a passenger train, I don't remember it," Colin said. "The closest thing I ever came to a train was riding a subway in Washington, D.C."

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May 1, 2010  
4:52 p.m.

**orlybbq writes:**

can't wait for this! please make it happen!

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May 1, 2010  
4:56 p.m.

**manofthecloth writes:**

This would be awesome we need it so bad, the trains are great, nice and clean and fast we need amtrak...please hurry

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May 1, 2010  
4:57 p.m.

**gatorsrule writes:**

Please do not. It will be a nuisance to many and a benefit to very few.

[Suggest removal](#)

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May 1, 2010  
6:08 p.m.

**Sandy\_Hooves writes:**

in response to **gatorsrule:**

Please do not. It will be a nuisance to many and a benefit to very few.

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Who would it be a nuisance to? It would go literally though my back yard and I welcome it.  
 The gates of the crossings going down four more times a day for a few minutes is nothing. Do you even know how many freight trains go through a day? These short relatively fast trains would delay traffic at surface crossings a fraction of the time the freights do.

May 1, 2010  
6:34 p.m.

**Interested writes:**

I used to travel on the train from Miami to Philadelphia every year and I loved it. I would love to have train service through here - beats having to drive everywhere.

[Suggest removal](#)

[Reply to this post](#)May 1, 2010  
7:18 p.m.**cmdr358#286280 writes:**

I've been looking forward to this for years and hope it happens- as long as it doesn't end up costing our cities.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)

On another note- it's nice to hear that elected officials were invited to go on a junket so that they could be wined and dined by AMTRAK officials. Nothing like a purely objective and reasoned decision based on perks rather than on information and public opinion.

Before any of you claim that it was a fact finding mission.....What? Do they not know what a train is and how it operates. It's similar to a bus which operates on the same principle as an automobile, except it's bigger and has it's own special roads that are called rail road tracks.

May 1, 2010  
7:51 p.m.**guywe#212563 writes:**

Thanks for the coverage, Stuart News. The train that I used to ride through Stuart in the 1950s has been gone since 1963 and it's high time we got it back!  
Ted Guy

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 1, 2010  
9:27 p.m.**guffanti#466047 writes:**

" Officials ... have been working ... on a \$268 million application for federal stimulus money "

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)

Are these people nuts? They're going from Miami to J-Ville, not from here to eternity or even to the moon.

I'd bet all that I won on the Derby that most of these millions will go directly to FEC. I am much in favor of the service, but this will be another monumental public rip off.

One other thing: it's going to take from 2 to 7 years to get started?

They just ran a train this very day on the EXACT tracks they propose to use. What is the problem? Does it take that much time to steal and split up \$268 million? If that's it, they ought to let Bernie Matoff orchestrate the transaction. That's bubble gum money to him. He'd disappear the money and have the trains running in no time flat.

May 1, 2010  
9:30 p.m.**guffanti#466047 writes:**

PS  
Since the train was one way....can we be assured that any and all the Liars, Cheats, and Thieves from IRC won't be coming back?  
Now, wouldn't that be nice?

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 1, 2010  
9:31 p.m.**mimi writes:**

I believe the addition of AMTRAK would boost the economy on the treasure coast - Access to better paying jobs in the larger cities down south, and minus the stress of having to drive to commute! Sounds perfect. I think this is a great idea.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 1, 2010  
9:36 p.m.**guffanti#466047 writes:**

PPS  
On 2nd thought, that might take all the fun out of seeing them kicked from office on election day.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)

It's a tough call .... get shed of them today...or... get to see their faces when they're dethroned.

.

May 1, 2010  
11:45 p.m.**iceman02 writes:**

Can anyone name a passenger rail service that didn't become a bottonless pit for the tax payers?! did'nt think so.Even in NY with millions of riders everyday the MTA sucks up millions in tax dollars every year.Here would be no different,this is the last thing we need.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 2, 2010  
6:03 a.m.

[Suggest removal](#)**rjlebleu#250530 writes:**[Reply to this post](#)

I tried booking a trip on Amtrak once from Dallas to Detroit. The cost was twice that of Airline travel. I would love to see train service along the coast but not if the cost is prohibitive and the Government has to subsidize the operation with as much as one penny.

May 2, 2010  
7:15 a.m.

**Ziggystaredust writes:**[Suggest removal](#)

Amtrak hasn't been cost effective since it's birth. Another Government run program!!

[Reply to this post](#)

May 2, 2010  
7:22 a.m.

**guffanti#466047 writes:**[Suggest removal](#)

in response to [iceman02](#):

[Reply to this post](#)

Can anyone name a passenger rail service that didn't become a bottomless pit for the tax payers? I didn't think so. Even in NY with millions of riders everyday the MTA sucks up millions in tax dollars every year. Here would be no different, this is the last thing we need.

you are correct re the MTA. the ONLY explanation is that they are stealing the money

same with the port of authority  
it steals money from the bridges and makes it disappear down their many rat holes

the \$268 million they talk about is ante up money.  
I bet the CEO of FEC gets a \$20 million bonus when this goes through... if not before

May 2, 2010  
9:23 a.m.

**p\_eunny writes:**[Suggest removal](#)

in response to [guffanti#466047](#):

[Reply to this post](#)

PPS  
On 2nd thought, that might take all the fun out of seeing them kicked from office on election day.  
It's a tough call .... get shed of them today...or... get to see their faces when they're dethroned.

Are you still drunk from winning the derby or what????

AND JUSY WHO DO YOU WANT ELECTED .... Surely not a REPUBLICAN

Here where the road forks. REPUBLICAN are part of the problem and have never been part of the solution!!!!

May 2, 2010  
10:01 a.m.

**NoJunkPIs writes:**[Suggest removal](#)

Is a strip search required to board or just X-ray of your private parts? Public transportation is a hot box for terrorists.

[Reply to this post](#)

May 2, 2010  
10:33 a.m.

**debbiechef#478820 writes:**[Suggest removal](#)

OH that would be so much fun to take a train home instead of flying. I hate flying and this would be so much more convenient. Please let this happen.

[Reply to this post](#)

May 2, 2010  
11:02 a.m.

**sandman21 writes:**[Suggest removal](#)

Do not waist our tax money. It has been a failure every were else and we are paying for it.

[Reply to this post](#)

May 2, 2010  
11:28 a.m.

**Lilchopp772 writes:**

I will love to see this happen. I never rode on a train in my life and will love to have the opportunity to. Plus, i can use this to work in big cities around the area.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 2, 2010  
11:47 a.m.**Brainiack writes:**

A great idea if they run it as a commute service for the Florida east coast and only stop in the big cities, e.g. Vero, West Palm, Ft. Lauderdale, Miami..... but, lets ask Doug....

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)

So Doug, is it your vision to make it a local express (not) and have it stop at Ft. Pierce, Jensen Beach, Stuart, Jupiter with a spur to Okeechobee? I'm sure Amtrak will be up for that.

You always have had your eyes on that lot across from Renar for that train station. Why don't you get your buddies to start your own train company and you can wear the engineers hat and blow the whistle, I'm sure you can get the county to build the stations at the expense of the taxpayers then rent the stations for \$1.00 – you've got that down pat.

May 2, 2010  
12:44 p.m.**Galaga writes:**

Please?

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 2, 2010  
12:56 p.m.**Galaga writes:**

in response to [sandman21](#):

Do not waist our tax money. It has been a failure every were else and we are paying for it.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)

Apparently we 'WAIST'ed our taxpayer dollars on your edu-macation. I think we can roll the dice on this one as well...

May 2, 2010  
1:03 p.m.**User72280 writes:**

268 million is a drop in the bucket for the privilege of using a private railroad that's been kept in top condition. We, the "taxpayers" don't own the FEC tracks. That's over 350 miles of good track for about the cost of a medium residential skyscraper. Not to mention those 268 million would also build and/or restore historic rail stations. Amtrak receives subsidies because most rail is private and not government owned. As a result, Amtrak is constantly waiting on freight trains which drives ridership down. If Amtrak is given priority (as is the current trend across the US) ridership will increase and the subsidies we pay to keep Amtrak in existence would decrease. Not to mention that if more people explore this mode of transport the subsidies for highway construction and airport construction would decline as well as user fees associated with using those modes of transport because of less wear and a decrease in demand for increased capacity. Positioning ourselves to utilize 3 major modes of transport as opposed to 2 also provides for increased opportunity, national security, and an the most environmentally sound way to mitigate projected population growth. In conclusion, this matter requires extensive consideration rather than just a dismissal by people who have absolutely no civil engineering background.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 2, 2010  
1:07 p.m.**rsmsem2 writes:**

We're the reason why rail is not successful. We must have it in this country. It is cost effective with enough riders. We must change our habits.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 2, 2010  
1:36 p.m.**hobesound#515953 writes:**

In Europe, some of the passenger trains stop at the airports (Paris, Amsterdam, Zurich, Geneva for example), and I have found it a great convenience. In order to appeal to a greater population to ride this passenger train , I recommend this proposed Amtrak service to have stops inside the airport terminals at Jacksonville, West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale, and Miami.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 2, 2010  
1:50 p.m.**SpeakSoftlyBut writes:**

The reality of rail is much less regal than the propaganda used to promote it.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 2, 2010  
4:06 p.m.**lessgovernmentnow writes:**

Here the reasons people in Europe ride the trains.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)

- 1) Parking: you can't find parking in old European cities that were designed for horse & buggy. When you do find it is very pricey.
- 2) Huge taxes on Gasoline. Most places have a 75% Gas tax. Take means if the station wants to collect 2 dollars, they have to charge 8 dollars. The tax is 6 dollars. It is then spend on lower the cost of riding the train.  
The poor & middle class are forced to ride the train.

May 2, 2010  
4:18 p.m.**Cynical\_Yet\_Compassionate writes:**

in response to [iceman02](#):

Can anyone name a passenger rail service that didn't become a bottomless pit for the tax payers?! didn't think so. Even in NY with millions of riders everyday the MTA sucks up millions in tax dollars every year. Here would be no different, this is the last thing we need.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)

LOL

The costs associated with just the maintenance and upgrades do not cause the deficit you describe...much NOW goes to security, being mostly underground in NYC above ground would not need an "entire" force for security on its' own...

We have a choice

We either provide for public or start to double deck or widen all highways, parkways, avenues, streets etc. to accommodate the inevitable increases in motorists...

May 2, 2010  
5:10 p.m.**iceman02 writes:**

in response to [Cynical\\_Yet\\_Compassionate](#):

LOL

The costs associated with just the maintenance and upgrades do not cause the deficit you describe...much NOW goes to security, being mostly underground in NYC above ground would not need an "entire" force for security on its' own...

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We either provide for public or start to double deck or widen all highways, parkways, avenues, streets etc. to accommodate the inevitable increases in motorists...

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The MTA was eating up tax dollars BEFORE 09-11-01. Secondly, as stated look for just one public rail service that does not eat up tax dollars. Look but you will not find one.

May 2, 2010  
5:25 p.m.**yearight writes:**

Cool! I hope it catches on and they set up a rail system that one would be able to access the whole state. Trains are awesome.

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 2, 2010  
5:32 p.m.**jbm8118 writes:**

Hopefully this will become reality sooner than later!!

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)May 2, 2010  
5:53 p.m.**guffanti#466047 writes:**

in response to [p\\_eunny](#):

Are you still drunk from winning the derby or what????

AND JUSY WHO DO YOU WANT ELECTED ....Surely not a REPUBLICAN

[Suggest removal](#)[Reply to this post](#)

Here where the road forks. REPUBLICAN are part of the problem and have never been part of the solution!!!!

Who do I want in office?  
Honest persons in possession of integrity.  
I doubt very many can be found in either major party.

May 2, 2010  
8:13 p.m.

**nativewooder writes:**

[Suggest removal](#)

[Reply to this post](#)

I can remember in 1948 riding the bus that went up and down Delaware Ave. in Fort Pierce, but was too little to take a train ride. Then the original "Scrooge" Ed Ball and greed eliminated the passenger trains. No matter the cost, we need a comprehensive public bus line and passenger rail service! All you cheapskate bean counters know that not everything in this world is to increase your profit!!!

May 2, 2010  
9:07 p.m.

**guffanti#466047 writes:**

[Suggest removal](#)

[Reply to this post](#)

in response to [User72280](#):

268 million is a drop in the bucket for the privilege of using a private railroad that's been kept in top condition. We, the "taxpayers" don't own the FEC tracks. That's over 350 miles of good track for about the cost of a medium residential skyscraper. Not to mention those 268 million would also build and/or restore historic rail stations. Amtrak receives subsidies because most rail is private and not government owned. As a result, Amtrak is constantly waiting on freight trains which drives ridership down. If Amtrak is given priority (as is the current trend across the US) ridership will increase and the subsidies we pay to keep Amtrak in existence would decrease. Not to mention that if more people explore this mode of transport the subsidies for highway construction and airport construction would decline as well as user fees associated with using those modes of transport because of less wear and a decrease in demand for increased capacity. Positioning ourselves to utilize 3 major modes of transport as opposed to 2 also provides for increased opportunity, national security, and an the most environmentally sound way to mitigate projected population growth. In conclusion, this matter requires extensive consideration rather than just a dismissal by people who have absolutely no civil engineering background.

You say that \$268 million is a drop in the bucket?  
Go sell that line to flood victims  
They'll tell you what little drops can do.

Now, here's some questions for you:

- 1] Why jump ahead and spend a whole lot of money to build / restore stations if there is no profit ? I hope you're not suggesting that multi million dollar stations will draw riders.
- 2] What is the maintenance cost per train per mile?  
From there the basic cost to use the tracks by Amtrak can be established.  
[ Naturally, FEC will tack on enough profit to give its CEO a well deserved \$20 million bonus ...to which I previously referred.]
- 3] What additional equipment needs to be added and at what cost?

And here's something of interest : Amtrak owns the tracks it uses from DC to Boston. Freight trains aren't allowed on those tracks. Why, you may ask? Too dangerous.

Again I'd love to see this train and hope that it would be profitable. But I'm not in favor of another taxpayer handout to another greedy corporation.

May 2, 2010  
9:20 p.m.

**guffanti#466047 writes:**

[Suggest removal](#)

[Reply to this post](#)

in response to [nativewooder](#):

I can remember in 1948 riding the bus that went up and down Delaware Ave. in Fort Pierce, but was too little to take a train ride. Then the original "Scrooge" Ed Ball and greed eliminated the passenger trains. No matter the cost, we need a comprehensive public bus line and passenger rail service! All you cheapskate bean counters know that not everything in this world is to increase your profit!!!

Ed Ball is ?

RE your " cheapskate bean counters " characterization:  
being cheap is not the point...getting ripped off is...or at least MY point.

And you were too little to ride the train ? ...  
was there a minimum age requirement here in Florida back then ?  
[ I wouldn't be surprised. ]

I was about 5 or 6 year years old when I got a ride in the cab of a steam locomotive... on a commercial freight train. Believe me, what a thrill.

May 3, 2010  
10:26 a.m.

**JZabcik writes:**

What a colossal waste of money. The automobile made train transport obsolete years ago. Don't kid yourself if you don't think that Nostalgia is what this is all about. Nostalgia is never a good investment of tax dollars.

[Suggest removal](#)

[Reply to this post](#)

May 3, 2010  
11:14 a.m.

**MHorn writes:**

Do those of you commenting pay Florida Property Taxes, drive a car with a Florida Tag, hold a Florida Driver's License, pay Federal Taxes through a Florida Company issued Payroll, pay Rent with should include State Tax monies, own a Florida Licensed Business collecting and paying proper taxes to the State of Florida and have you done this for more than 25 years?

[Suggest removal](#)

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If yes, then you are truly supporting the State of Florida. But if not, you are, pardon the pun, riding the gravy train! Your comments and gripes mean nothing to me.

Florida Taxes pay for, the Florida Highway Patrol, the County and City Law Enforcement "those who watch over our highways and byways" and for Florida's modes of transportation; dirt roads, back roads, grove roads, driveways, highways, interstates, sidewalks, buses, trolleys, and river roads.

Also, the freight train service, and after some 35+ years of waiting, hopefully, the passenger train service on this coast. I am looking forward to riding the trails again!

May 3, 2010  
12:11 p.m.

**Jacobwb7 writes:**

A train stop in Stuart, Fort Pierce, would be a very welcomed change/return, to expanding our transportation options.

[Suggest removal](#)

[Reply to this post](#)

May 3, 2010  
12:11 p.m.

**fire5506#485367 writes:**

I see all the posts about tax payers paying for the passenger trains. I would like for the nay sayers to tell me one mode of transportation that doesn't use tax dollar subsidiaries.

[Suggest removal](#)

[Reply to this post](#)

Highways?? Wrong, built and maintained with tax dollars.

Air lines?? Wrong, Tax Dollars pay for and maintain the airports and air traffic controllers.

Boats?? Wrong, the docks and wharfs built and maintained by tax dollars.

The \$268 million is for the stations and upgrades needed for the passenger trains.

Running one train doesn't mean that everything is ready for regular service.

I keep seeing MTA referenced. Do you think they could build enough roads to handle all the cars that would need to use them if the MTA wasn't there? And where would the money for the roads come from? Yes taxes, Plus how much more pollution would New York have if you added a couple million more car trips a day, if MTA wasn't there?

You can't look at just one thing, look at the whole picture. All transportation costs tax payers.

May 3, 2010  
12:53 p.m.

**Michael\_Goforth (STAFF) writes:**

Fired up for passenger service:

<http://tinyurl.com/35qaa82>

[Suggest removal](#)

[Reply to this post](#)

May 3, 2010  
1:08 p.m.

[Suggest removal](#)**JZabcik writes:**[Reply to this post](#)

fire5 - "All transportation costs tax payers."

Yes indeed, that is where the rub is. Which form gives the most bang for the buck spent. Tax dollars spent on roads for automobiles is far for efficient than passenger rail. Trains have schedules, automobiles do not. When you get to your destination by rail, then what? Walk?

This passenger rail service is all about nostalgia. Pure and simple.

May 3, 2010  
2:06 p.m.

**fire5506#485367 writes:**[Suggest removal](#)in response to **JZabcik:**

fire5 - "All transportation costs tax payers."

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Yes indeed, that is where the rub is. Which form gives the most bang for the buck spent. Tax dollars spent on roads for automobiles is far for efficient than passenger rail. Trains have schedules, automobiles do not. When you get to your destination by rail, then what? Walk?

This passenger rail service is all about nostalgia. Pure and simple.

Cars are more efficient??? How do you figure that? Convenient, yes. Efficient, no.

Cars average somewhere between 15 and 30 miles to the gallon for let's say a family of 4.

A freight train can move a ton of freight 435 miles on a gallon of fuel, I'm sure a passenger train isn't as efficient as a freight train so let's say 200 miles on a gallon for a ton of people I'm going to average 280 pounds for the person and baggage so then you would have about 7 people going 200 miles on a gallon of fuel compared to 4 people using almost 7 gallons at 30 miles (which would be the high end) to the gallon to go the same 200 miles. Which is more efficient?

When you get there you could use public transportation, rent a car or have someone pick you up. If we walked more we'd all be healthier.

I agree it's not as convenient, but it is definitely "more efficient", which was your point.

May 3, 2010  
3:22 p.m.

**JZabcik writes:**[Suggest removal](#)

fire5, I notice that you do not equate efficiency with convenience. I do. That is where we disagree.

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You are like so many others. You put statistics (MPG in this case) in a vacuum and then decide which is better. I look at the whole picture. MPG is only a part of the decision making process. You see it as the only reason to decide which is better.

<< When you get there you could use public transportation, rent a car or have someone pick you up. If we walked more we'd all be healthier.>>

Yea! That's the ticket. We will need to spend even more \$\$ to get people to ride. We all love a walk in Florida's sun (esp. in the summer months)! Oh, walking in the rain is fun too.

This train will add how much time over a automobile?

Nostalgia is driving this train.

May 3, 2010  
4:37 p.m.

**gatorsrule writes:**[Suggest removal](#)

I agree with the nostalgia angle. Truth is that we all have the same or better access to Amtrak now than we have to airports, and yet we drive to West Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale to take a plane. A car is always going to be cheaper and more convenient for short trips if you need to rent another at your destination. And freight trains are so efficient because they are so densely loaded, not because trains get great fuel mileage.

[Reply to this post](#)

May 3, 2010  
4:38 p.m.

**reg#398081 writes:**[Suggest removal](#)in response to **JZabcik:**

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[Reply to this post](#)

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Anyone who is opposed to his just needs to look outside America at the rest of the world and see where it works great for every other country in the world.

Unfortunately it is the looking outside America, which American are extremely bad at, and then we try to use excuses to pretend our way is the best.

May 3, 2010  
5:48 p.m.

**JZabcik writes:**

reg, Context context context!

[Suggest removal](#)

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I have looked outside the US and what strikes me is that most of the cities with efficient rail systems (e.g. Paris, London) are in cities that had most of their growth before the automobile was invented. Most of our growth was build around the automobile as the mode of transportation. Rail in the US now amounts to putting the tooth paste back into the tube.

If we agree to spend tax dollars on nostalgia, then fine let's spend tax dollars on nostalgia. I resent the dis-honesty that rail is a viable alternative to the automobile. Let's call it what it is! Pure nostalgia! Let's ask ourselves honestly - How much priority should nostalgia get of our tax dollars? That is the real question.

May 3, 2010  
6:02 p.m.

**FlimFlam writes:**

"Leasing a Mercedes for each rider is more cost effective than rail subsidies" was the sign I carried in Ft Pierce the day Amtrak came through. I'm under no illusion that my efforts or this letter will make a difference but someone must be the responsible adult. It's a thankless job but necessary.

[Suggest removal](#)

[Reply to this post](#)

While we continue to hope and some even believe our economy is improving, it's just as fictitious as before only this time instead of the banks stuffing our mailboxes with "free money" offers it's now the government. How quickly we forget to learn from our mistakes.

Spending billions we no longer have must stop at every level of government. Our debt continues to increase daily because we no longer create wealth. It's guesstimated we're one to three trillion behind in infrastructure maintenance and yet we continue to increase our infrastructure without considering the payments. Didn't we just do that with credit cards and refinancings?

Most of those assembled at the tracks to greet the train were retired. Safe and secure in the economic benefits we once enjoyed, they all wanted to go for a "train ride" all happily oblivious to the financial consequences of the millions needed each year to subsidize it. They should know better.

We need to understand we're not the economic powerhouse we once were, those days are over. The decline started with "Made in Japan" and culminated with "Made in China". China will soon be like Japan and ourselves, they'll use their new found wealth to build and build thinking it'll go on forever but one day industry will leave and they'll be left with the same massive debt as we and just like us, no way to pay for it.

Someone needs to be the responsible adult.

May 4, 2010  
5:42 p.m.

**JZabcik writes:**

FF, there are fewer and fewer adults these days. If'n you haven't noticed. I think it goes back to the 26th amendment (1971). It was put in in response to the military draft. Once the draft was no longer used (1973) we should have had the language to set it back to 21. But NO! So here we are dealing with childish logic.

[Suggest removal](#)

[Reply to this post](#)

May 4, 2010  
11:22 p.m.

**Sandy\_Hooves writes:**

in response to [iceman02](#):

[Suggest removal](#)

[Reply to this post](#)

Can anyone name a passenger rail service that didn't become a bottomless pit for the tax payers? I didn't think so. Even in NY with millions of riders everyday the MTA sucks up millions in tax dollars every year. Here would be no different, this is the last thing we need.

You may be right but let's not confuse commuter service with Amtrak. The MTA doesn't have sleeper berths that go for \$500 plus the cost of the ticket. The more people that ride the MTA trains the more it costs the taxpayers and the auto drivers because the ticket prices are kept artificially low to keep the commuters happy at the expense of car owners who subsidize it with tolls.

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