

In view of overall industry profits, I cannot agree with railroad carriers that the public must establish its own passenger services and that railroads have no obligation to provide passenger services.

In New Jersey, as in many other States, such callous rejection of the public interest has had critical and adverse impact. Apart from almost interminable delays during peak hours, the discontinuance of fragmentation of passenger routes has imposed discomfort, inconvenience, higher fares and outright economic loss on the commuting public.

In my opinion, an equitable sharing of the necessary financial burden between the commuter public, the railroad industry, and the State and Federal Governments is called for.

I am thus encouraged by section 2, paragraph 4, of this legislation which directs the Secretary of Transportation to examine the ability of both private and governmental sources to financially contribute to the needs of passenger service programs.

I would also urge this subcommittee, Mr. Chairman, to specify that the proposed investigation will include an examination of the potential benefits to be derived from modernization and reequipping of commuter lines.

In my judgment, such as investment in improved comfort facilities, standardization of platforms and station ticket validation facilities, high-speed electric cars, interconnected routes, improved track and signal changes, elimination of grade crossings, improved commuter parking facilities, can do much to reduce operating deficits and to provide improved commuter services. Certainly their advantages and costs should be weighed and probed by this study.

In conclusion, I would commend the supporters of this bill for their recognition of the tremendous potential that improved railroad commuter service holds for both urban and suburban areas. The substantive restrictions on the withdrawal of commuter services by the industry are also encouraging to me. Hopefully, they will lead to a flexible Federal policy which will equitably equate the critical public need for rail passenger services with the carriers' capability and responsibility to provide these essential facilities.

In my judgment, the provisions of the present bill which extend the period of Interstate Commerce Commission consideration of discontinuance from 4 to 7 months and authorize the Commission to require continuance of service for an additional 2 months, if necessary to complete investigation, and (2) require railroads to affirmatively demonstrate that public convenience and necessity permit discontinuation, are important steps in this direction.

May I just say, having listened to the testimony, that I think the question asked by Mr. Adams is a question that goes to the very heart of this problem, especially in the areas of the country from whence I come, and that is how are we going to solve the problem of getting the man in and out of the big city. And today I know that all of you have frequently visited such areas as Philadelphia, and New York, and Newark, and I for one am always troubled as I am caught in a traffic jam as to what really would occur if there were a disaster, a fire, or some catastrophe within the heart of that city. It would be impossible to get the emergency equipment in and about the city.

The time is rapidly approaching, in my judgment, in these areas when we are going to have to find some way of keeping the people