

January 18, 2007

Jake Krohn
517 Summerlea Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15232

Port Authority Service Proposal
Heinz 57 Center
345 Sixth Avenue
Pittsburgh PA 15222-2527

Dear Sir or Madam:

I would like to comment on the proposed fare increase and service cuts. I recognize the difficulty of funding an agency the size of the Port Authority given the lack of regular financial support from the county and state government. I have been and will continue to be a supporter of securing a more dedicated source of transit funding. That being said, I am disappointed in the lack of effort by both Mr. Bland and County Executive Onorato to encourage the Pennsylvania Legislature to act quickly and appropriately.

I welcome the \$2 fare if it is indeed accompanied by the flat rate system. Elimination of the zone system and the "pay when you get on/off" rule will improve the experience of many who are not well versed in the intricacies of the current Byzantine payment system.

(One request, however – with the elimination of the zone system, please encourage the more frequent use of the back doors on crowded buses. Rarely, if ever, have I ever been witness to a fare jumper utilizing the back doors to his advantage. And even so, the benefits for the many would greatly outweigh the drawbacks imposed by the few.)

I welcome the elimination of routes with far less enthusiasm, but realize it is a necessary step to bring the agency back in the black. I hope that this plan contains provisions to restore cut service if additional funding is secured or additional savings can be realized by contract negotiation. I feel the Port Authority is an invaluable asset and must not succumb to a bottom-seeking mentality.

However, I must object to the elimination of the 28X. A major metropolitan area without a means of mass transit between the city and its airport can hardly be considered "major" or "metropolitan." My wife and I make exclusive use of it as an alternative to the wasteful automobile trip and subsequent parking fees that a trip to the airport entails. And as a member of the university community, I see the frequent use the route receives from students and visitors. Perhaps runs could be less frequent or use the smaller buses, but outright elimination of the route is too much to fathom.

I would also like to question the logic used in determining ridership numbers for many of the suburban buses that experience heavy one-way traffic and must deadhead out of the city. Does not this skew the statistics of routes like the 78A, which is consistently packed into and out of town in the morning and evening, respectively? Is there not some better way to deal with the influx of suburban buses, such as reassigning them city routes during the day or shuttering them until they are again needed in the afternoon? I fear for the increased pollution and wasteful resource consumption that an increase in private automobile commuting will bring.

Sincerely,

Jake Krohn