

Charles Buckner

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Concerned Montana Citizens Against Amtrak

I represent the citizens of our great state that are opposed to the expansion of the Amtrak train line through southern Montana. This is a project that will surely fail to spur Montana's economy, and should therefore be discarded.

Amtrak is a program funded by the federal government providing public transportation throughout the entire continental United States. However, Amtrak's services are taking advantage of primarily in the north east part of our country. Currently, Amtrak has never run a profit in its nearly 40 years of operation, and chances are that it never will. Because Amtrak is government ran, profit is not an incentive for the business. Because Amtrak is run by the government, they can continue to function without having to worry about business expenses, customer satisfaction, or productivity. The entire system is tax-funded, taking away everything that a good business strives for in order to provide quality service to customers. Due to the lack of incentive Amtrak has to make a profit it provides mediocre service, at best. There are currently better alternatives to getting from point A to point B in Montana, such as highways and aviation. The expense of expanding Amtrak through more of Montana will not produce the benefits necessary to justify the cost incurred. In short, Amtrak will only burn more tax payer dollars, without providing nearly the economic boost that some believe it will bring about via tourism.

Based on this fact, I do not believe there should be any question about why Amtrak is a program that has no home in Montana. People have more pleasant and efficient means of transportation. In our world today it is important to make wise investments with money. Clearly Amtrak does not fall under the 'wise investment' category.

I will support legislation that opposes the expansion of the Amtrak line through Montana.

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