



## Responding to Bill Granfield’s Letter to the Editor of Friday, May 31, 2019 on Commuter Rail

Jane Aitken

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I’d like to correct some statements made by [Bill Granfield in this May 31 letter](#):

Commuter Rail is considered so “last century.” Even “high-speed rail” is outdated technology according to a respected researcher at the CATO Institute who wrote, “High-speed rail is an obsolete technology that is good for neither the environment nor personal mobility.” It might help to [read the full article](#).

It also might help to [listen to this fact-filled podcast](#) on why trains are so loved by central planners — those who have fallen for the urbanism/high-density fads.

The Federal Money called for in the bill is NOT just to “fund a simple study.” The exact verbiage in the bill is to fund the “project development phase of the capitol corridor rail project.” The studies have already been done and we have referred to them repeatedly.

The Saint Anselm’s poll, as pointed out in [Drew Cline’s recent UL article](#), did not ask the people they surveyed if they would actually ride this train, nor if they would be willing to pay the excess in taxes and fees that would be required to run it. The DOT in its own Capitol Corridor Rail Study recommended that “several new taxes and fees” would be necessary.

I might add that the DOT’s own study suggests that this train would not have enough ridership and thus would have “little if any discernible impact on highway traffic congestion.” That question was also not asked of those surveyed. It also concluded that it “might not reduce commute times.” Another drawback is it would have to (artificially) create riders by creating “more density near any train station.” The only conclusion one could come to is that it is just not worth it. To my comment that NHPR noted that only a small percentage of the current commuters choose the train, Granfield states that this shows a lack of ridership is an issue that needs to be “fixed.” Apparently, he believes it’s the state’s job to socially engineer people into ditching their cars.

Granfield also claims that “no one has ever mentioned this being “high speed” at all.” Perhaps the author doesn’t get out that much, but in the hundreds of people I have surveyed, many of them mistakenly think that this would be some sort of “bullet train.” It won’t, but those are not the kinds of details highly paid lobbyists bother to include in their propaganda to wide-eyed train lovers. Amazingly, many of these same people also believe this would not cost the state anything.

High-speed rail DOES exist in the United States. Amtrak's Acela Express (reaching 150 mph), Northeast Regional, Keystone Service, and certain MARC Penn Line express trains are the only high-speed services in the country. The largest high-speed rail fiasco in American history was enthusiastically pushed by Democrat Governor Jerry "Moonbeam" Brown of California. Their high-speed project has failed so badly, the federal government is now demanding California pay back almost a \$100 billion dollars of federal funds

There is plenty of evidence that the MBTA runs, on average, at 33-44 MPH. Because while these trains are capable of going 65 MPH, they rarely do. This fact is easily checked for accuracy on the MBTA's own website.

In another article from CATO you will see how facts are twisted, or at best, misinterpreted when it comes to speeds.

Granfield was correct when he said there isn't one single Public Transportation project in the world that runs a "profit." But he forgot to mention that while roads also cost, 97 percent of us choose to use them, and no one is going to convince us to give up our cars for trains. Therefore, NH shouldn't go bankrupt trying.

As for the aging issue, this is not the first time Granfield has made discriminatory remarks about NH's over-55 population. If youth want to live here, they should work their way into the state like the rest of us did. The state should not be using our taxpayer monies to lure them, nor should it be required to transport them to jobs out of state.

In conclusion, the author's poorly researched article is based mostly on emotions and not facts that could have easily been looked up.

Governor Sununu has said, and still knows, that this commuter rail deal would be the worst boondoggle in NH's history. It is hoped he will use common sense and VETO the whole thing before it destroys us.