

Memorandum



Date March 18, 2010

To Metro-North Committee

From Howard Permut *HP*

Re **Service Reduction Plan**

This memo addresses the final service plan reductions to be implemented on June 21st.

Metro-North evaluated all comments received through the public hearing process and considered the mobility implications to our customers and the hardship that some service cuts may cause. Therefore, certain modifications to the original service reduction plan presented to the Board on January 25, 2010 have been made. These modifications are:

- Elimination of the Port Jervis Line service change proposal
- Modification of the Harlem Line service change proposal
- Modification of the New Haven Line service change proposal

I. Overall Impact of Modifications to Service Reduction Plan

The overall financial impact of these modifications will result in a total annual savings of approximately \$5M instead of the original target of \$5.4M. (MTA share of savings is \$4.5M – as detailed in the attachment).

II. Modifications to the MNR Service Change Proposals

A. Elimination of the Port Jervis Line service change proposal

The proposed service changes for the Port Jervis Line consist of the discontinuance of two trains: train 58, the 9:20 AM weekday Off-Peak train from Port Jervis to Hoboken; and train 61, the 6:27 PM weekday Peak train from Hoboken to Port Jervis. We received numerous objections to this proposal.

- Many individuals, including elected officials and customers expressed concern that these cuts would be proportionally more onerous for Port Jervis Line customers than for other MNR commuters due to the significantly lower number of trains operated on the Port Jervis Line (7.6% of weekday service would be discontinued).

- Customers stated that the elimination of train 61 created an unacceptable and significantly large service gap for customers at Sloatsburg and Tuxedo because the previous train (#59, the 6:11 PM Peak Harriman Express train) does not stop at these stations. The resulting service gap for Sloatsburg and Tuxedo would be 67 minutes, from 5:40 PM to 6:47 PM, compared to 36 minutes for stations from Harriman through Port Jervis.
- Customers stated that the elimination of train 58 would result in their having to take a train one hour and forty minutes earlier in order to arrive at their destination in time for work or other commitments.

As a result of these comments and the impact of this service change on the public, our plan no longer includes the elimination of service on our Port Jervis Line.

Note that Metro-North had an option for additional East of Hudson service cuts in lieu of the Port Jervis cuts. This involved the discontinuance/combination of eight Harlem Line trains. We are not recommending these changes.

B. Modification of the Harlem Line service change proposal

The proposed service changes for the Harlem Line consist of the combination of train 681, the 7:52 PM Peak Southeast train, and train 683, the 7:57 PM Peak Mount Kisco train into one train; and the discontinuance of train 693, the 10:29 PM weekday Southeast train.

- Customers stated that the elimination of train 693 would result in a significant service gap between the earlier train (9:54 PM to Southeast) and the next train (11:09 PM to Southeast). Customers indicated that this train provides an important service and ensures they have service at the time of evening when they need it due to work and other obligations.

As a result of these comments and the impact of this service change on the public, we now recommend that this proposed action be eliminated from the service change proposal. To preserve the savings realized from Harlem Line service changes, the following alternative service change is recommended:

- Discontinue the 7:28 PM Peak train from Grand Central Terminal to Crestwood. Approximately 292 customers would take the 7:30 PM local train from Grand Central Terminal to North White Plains, resulting in nine minutes of additional travel time.

C. Modification of the New Haven Line service change proposal

The proposed service changes for the New Haven Line consist of the discontinuance of train 1532, the 1:34 PM weekday Off-Peak New Haven train and train 1569, the 2:33 PM Off-Peak weekday train from New Haven to Grand Central Terminal; and the discontinuance of the 1:15 AM Stamford local seven days per week (the 12:25 AM Stamford local would be adjusted 15 minutes later, to 12:40 AM, to lessen the resulting service gap).

- Based on comments received from customers about the service change proposal, the Connecticut Department of Transportation requested that Metro-North modify the proposal by adding a Greenwich stop on the 1:12 AM outer New Haven express train from Grand Central Terminal. This change will reduce the impact of the proposed late night change on Connecticut residents by giving Greenwich customers an alternative to the train being eliminated.
- This will result in no change in savings from the proposed action.

New Haven Line service changes require the approval of the Connecticut Department of Transportation.

See attached for the final service reduction plan to take effect on June 21st.

cc: J. Walder
C. Monheim
W. Wheeler
D. Evans
R. Burney
S. J. Cummins
R. E. Lieblong
R. C. MacLagger
K. Porcelain