

Congressman Rothman: Privatizing Railroads is Wrong Way to Go

The following Letter to the Editor appeared in The Record on July 16, 2011.

Privatizing Railroads is Wrong Way to Go

"Not onboard: Privatizing parts of Amtrak carries risks" (Editorials, July 6) hit the spike on the head in calling proposals to privatize Amtrak's Northeast Corridor as "ironic." Amtrak was created in 1971 precisely because private passenger rail companies were failing, going bankrupt and terminating commuter service throughout the country.

We don't need to spend more taxpayer dollars on corporate welfare in order to provide greater profits for big business; we need to spend these dollars where they belong — investing in our public transportation system. If advocates really believe that privatization is the best way to improve our crumbling transportation infrastructure, why not start with the Amtrak rail lines that are in most need of repair instead of its most profitable one, the Northeast Corridor?

America's competitors abroad are spending billions of dollars to build and maintain rail systems to create jobs and develop infrastructure that improve the quality of life for their people. The United States needs to make similar investments.

Steve Rothman

Fair Lawn, July 12

The writer, a Democrat, represents New Jersey's 9th District in the House of Representatives.

http://www.northjersey.com/news/opinions/letters/125677948_The_Record__Letters__July_16__2011.html?page=all