

MR. COHEN: Good evening. My name is

Edward Cohen. I chair two of the MTA Citizen Advisory Committees and the MTA Citizens Advisory Committee for Accessible Transportation, at the Schaefer Tower,

. We, the members of the CAC and the CACAT oppose the B&P Tunnel Replacement Plan for the following reasons:

It will permanently eliminate any possibility of restoring the Northern Central Railroad right-of-way with a connection to the northeast part. For years, Pennsylvania has been calling for passenger service along the Northern Corridor to York, Pennsylvania. It is shortsighted to construct a rail project that forever prevents such service. If service on the Northern Central Railroad were to be reestablished, it would be easy to connect the line with the Howard Street Tunnel and to provide Amtrak passenger service between Miami and Toronto, with intermediate stops including Orlando, Jacksonville, Charleston, Fayetteville, Raleigh, Richmond, Washington, D.C., Harrisburg, and Buffalo. It's inappropriate for Amtrak to be supporting a project that prevents such expansion.

It will permanently eliminate any possibility of restoring rail service between the Northeast Corridor and the Hanover sub. The land required to restore the wye just west of Fulton Interlocking (and Avenue) is still available. Restoration of the wye would permit MARC service between Baltimore or Washington and Westminster, Hagerstown, Hanover, and Gettysburg. Amtrak could create a Northeast

Corridor Bypass through York, Lancaster, and Allentown to Morristown, Newark, and either Hoboken Terminal or Penn Station New York City. Restoration of this connection would also permit Amtrak service from Baltimore to numerous western cities, including Pittsburgh, Chicago, and Denver. It is unwise for Amtrak and MARC to be supporting a project that prevents such expansion.

It prevents the construction of a Sandtown/Winchester MARC station, which is part of the 2003 Baltimore Regional Rail Plan in state law.

It prevents construction of a connection between the MARC Penn Line service and the Baltimore Metro Subway Upton Station in a rebuilt B&P Tunnel system or Penn Line trains only. Years ago, there was a station at Pennsylvania Avenue in the tunnel.

It does not address Penn Station capacity constraints. Amtrak expects to double its Northeast Corridor service and MARC expects to triple its service. In the long term, Penn Station is likely to prove inadequate to support these demands.

It does not address Amtrak's need for a new

high-speed tunnel capable of supporting 220 mile-per-hour service. The high-speed tunnel must be built at some point anyway. To build a Great Circle Tunnel and spend money on the remnants of the B&P Tunnel would cost far more in the long term than to build a high-speed tunnel first and rebuild the B&P Tunnels for MARC use only afterwards. With this scale of expenditure, the 125-year depreciation period makes it practically impossible to justify the huge difference in cost of the Great Circle Tunnel versus the rebuild for MARC service only. The long depreciation period requires that we receive value for our public investment for the whole period. Resulting operational capabilities would be far greater as well. The decision to build this alternative was predicated upon a decision to continue Amtrak service through Penn Station.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Mr. Cohen, your time is up. I ask you that you might conclude your statement.

MR. COHEN: Okay. Let me just say that the committees put together a rail plan for Baltimore that was comprehensive, and it was integrated, and we have a copy of it here, and we are submitting this along with our reasons for not supporting this particular planning process, and it addresses virtually everything that I have heard so far tonight.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you.

MR. COHEN: Thank you.