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Colorful Comments from Curmudgeonly Commuters : Cameron on Transportation

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As I hope you can tell, I love writing this column. As New York Times columnist Tom Friedman once said, a commentator [should be in the heating business and the lighting business](#)— getting people fired up while providing factual support for his arguments.

The comments I receive from readers each week reminds me that heat runs both ways.

Here are some of the recent highlights:

When I wrote about [the power failures on Metro-North](#), user cantchangestupid commented on the column: “I sure hope a thorough investigation gets done on why those transformers failed. I see sabotage as the

democratic conclusion.” Gee, and I thought I was cynical.

There’s also this gem from user StaggerLee: “Am I the only one who thinks Jim Cameron is a Useful Id-yot put out there to enable the spendthrift DemocRATs doing their best to drive the state’s economy into the ground?” You’re not alone StaggerLee. Your colorfully named (yet anonymous) friends say that a lot, though it is not true.

On the recently approved [“lock box” on the Special Transportation Fund](#), user NotMyProblem opined: “The current Gov already figured out how to get around the lockbox by simply diverting funds before they made it into the lockbox.” That’s true, as I pointed out in [a recent column](#).

On Twitter, rpm4Liberty noted that Metro-North fares, though the highest of any commuter railroad in the U.S., don’t cover the operating costs but require a state subsidy. He noted: “my truck starts every morning when I want it to, and I don’t need roads.” Wow — a flying truck?

And Grizzly Beer Bear adds: “So is it wrong (to ask) the people who use this 18th century form of transportation to pay for it? For that money, you could BUY A CAR and not steal money from people who will NEVER use the rail service.” Obviously, Mr Bear enjoys driving in bumper-to-bumper traffic and wants to add to it by pricing rail riders off trains and back into their cars.

For April Fools Day, I [tweeted a picture of a railroad dome car](#), soon to be added to Metro-North service, noting that the ride may not be fast but it sure would be scenic. A few followers thought the news was true, but one guy who got the joke commented, “When the train derails from lack of PTC, you’re already halfway outside!”

Most of the emails I receive are from commuters just asking for help: Where to complain about late trains, how to report uncollected tickets on a crowded train or asking about the lack of station parking. I’m always glad to direct people where to get answers.

Having been at this commuter advocacy mission for awhile, I occasionally even get a note of thanks. Christian N recently emailed me that his commute never seems to improve, adding “I am losing all hope. But thanks for your advocacy. You deserve to go to heaven.”

That final ride, I answered, would probably be on a local train, running late, but oh, so scenic.

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