



March 19, 2018

New York State Department of State  
Office of Planning, Development & Community Infrastructure  
One Commerce Plaza  
99 Washington Avenue  
Albany, New York 12231

**Re: Comments on Public Notice - F-2018-0060**

Scenic Hudson and Riverkeeper have each received numerous phone calls and emails expressing opposition to Amtrak's proposal to install gates and or fences along the railroad right-of way in Rhinebeck (Rhinecliff), Tivoli, Germantown, Stockport and Stuyvesant. As longstanding proponents of expanding public access to the Hudson River, we share their concerns.

Scenic Hudson and Riverkeeper also strongly believe in the public's right to participate in decision-making processes that affect community and individual quality of life — in this case decisions that would reduce public access to the Hudson River and negatively impact viewsheds. Not only is public participation in many instances required, it's simply a good idea because a collaborative planning process can result in practical solutions that can resolve conflicts in ways that benefit all parties.

Given the outpouring of public concern and the need for the public to participate meaningfully in this decision-making process, both Scenic Hudson and Riverkeeper believe the 15-day public comment period is partial to the applicant's interest and insufficient for affected stakeholders. Fifteen days is simply not enough time to capture the public's concerns regarding the proposal's impact on the loss of river access and to viewsheds. Public information provided by Amtrak to date is completely inadequate making meaningful public comment impossible. Additionally, we believe that the proposed gate and or fence installations, while part of one application, have very different ramifications at each location, and as such require separate public meetings.

Therefore we request that public information meetings be held in each municipality where gate and/or fence installations are proposed — Rhinecliff, Tivoli, Germantown, Stockport and Stuyvesant. Rail representatives must provide each community with the specific details of all proposed gates and or fences and provide data to justify each project individually. Each meeting must be part of the official public record with a stenographer recording all public comments. Only upon the conclusion of the final community meeting, should a 30-day comment

period begin. This would ensure that everyone interested in this issue has ample opportunity to submit informed written comments to the Department of State.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeff Anzevino, Scenic Hudson, Director of Land Use Advocacy  
John Lipscomb, Riverkeeper, Patrol Boat Captain & Vice President for Advocacy