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The Underbuzz

To the individual who left a letter in my bus, there was a time when I saw the same thing through my belief widows. My belief window changed after I had a talk with Lamont Nelson (Several directors ago). I don't know if it's true but it sounded reasonable at the time. At that time I had written permission to park my bus at home (#50). I was told I had to start parking at night, back at the shop. So I had a visit with him about this issue. He said several factors come into play. We operate our buses slightly less than what the state reimburses us, he said. We do this by having a lower overhead at Freeport. Also we get by with less mechanics than other bus shops and other cost

cutting techniques. If we continue to park the bus at your home we would save miles on the bus but the route miles we submit to state would be less, thereby reducing the money we receive from the State of Utah. Therefore there are no incentives from the State for us to save miles. Next factor is shop rate. The shop rate for a diesel mechanic is about \$60.00 per hour. This takes in the wages, insurance, retirement, electricity, cost of tools, uniforms and cleaning, the building and support. From the time the mechanic stops working on a vehicle in the shop to clean his hands to answer the phone/radio, we're paying him to go to your home in the wee hours of the morning to fix a flat or

jump start a bus. They generally send two mechanics for flats. The time to fix the flat isn't the problem. It's the time getting to it and returning back to the shop and getting restarted on whatever they stopped working on. That's what we have a problem with. It seems several times a week we need to jump start a bus. By doing the math over the course of a year you will discover we lose money by parking a bus at the drivers' home during the night. There has also been a problem with sub drivers finding the bus and getting out on the street without hitting something. If we allow drivers to consistently park at home and not submit the route sheet reflecting the lower

mileage we can be denied funds by the state for embezzlement. On occasion we have tolerated drivers parking at home for a night or two when it's been in the best interest of the district. "Don't concern yourself, only we need to know why and we usually do". To this date I understand that his recall of most of the buses back to the shop was in our districts best interest. My new belief window is the state needs to create a formula that rewards districts for saving miles on the buses by parking at home. Until then, I submit to parking at the shop 98% of the time.

Jim Britten
P.S. Contact me and we can talk about the other issues in your letter.

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