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# Mountain Line paying commuters to park in Westover

By [Josh Cooper](#)

**Published:** Thursday, September 2, 2010

**Updated:** Thursday, September 2, 2010 00:09

Mountain Line Transit Authority is offering students and employees of West Virginia University up to \$20 in Mountie Bountie per month to park for free in an effort to reduce traffic in the Morgantown area.

The program, which began July 1, encourages WVU commuters, faculty and staff to avoid congested downtown areas, park at its Westover Park and Ride Lot on DuPont Road and travel by bus, said David Bruffy, general manager of Mountain Line Transit Authority, in an e-mail.

"A successful program would benefit the community by reducing traffic congestion and lessening the need for additional parking in the downtown area," Bruffy said.

Participants get free parking in their lot and transportation to the Mountain Line bus depot located at 185 Garrett Street, according to its website.

Parking spaces are not guaranteed and are first-come, first-served, the site states.

WVU students and faculty can then commute from the depot by obtaining a bus pass, which is good for five round trips and can be renewed, the website states.

The passes are only good to board buses located at the lot and depot between 6:55 a.m. through 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, the website states.

Mountain Line pays \$1 per round-trip, with a maximum payment of \$5 per week, according to its website.

A participant will only receive the payment if he or she rides the bus for a full round trip each day with at least 60 minutes in between each boarding, the site states.

The money will be deposited directly to participants' Mountie Bountie accounts every two weeks.

If the program is ever canceled, partial tickets and tickets turned in after the cancellation date will not receive payment, the site states.

Students showed mixed feelings toward the new program.

"It would be a good idea, but the bus system's not always reliable," said Brenden Jobin, a sophomore sports management major. "What would you do if one of the buses broke down or got stuck in traffic and you missed class?"

Others believed the program was a good idea, saying it would help reduce congestion and carbon emissions.

"It will definitely be a lot greener in the long run," said Adrian Hayes, a freshman marketing major. "I would really think about doing it if I had my car here."

Bruffy hopes the program will catch on and inspire others to do the same.

"This program encourages a more sustainable lifestyle, and if successful, might serve as a model for similar parking areas around the community," he said.