



June 10, 2009

The Honorable David Price
Chairman
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
House Committee on Appropriations
B-307 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Price:

On behalf of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and its nearly 1,500 member organizations, I write to express our concern over the Fiscal Year 2010 Homeland Security Appropriations bill approved by your subcommittee on Monday, which cuts funding for the transit security grant program to \$250 million. This is significantly below the 9/11 Commission Act authorized level of \$900 million as well as the \$400 million appropriated in FY2009.

Public transportation is a critical component of our nation's infrastructure. Americans take more than 10.7 billion transit trips each year. People use public transportation vehicles more than 35 million times each weekday. This is eighteen times the number of daily boardings on the nation's domestic airlines. Both the Department of Homeland Security and Congress have fully acknowledged that terrorist threats to transit agencies are real and have not diminished. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a 2002 report which said "about one-third of terrorist attacks worldwide target transportation systems, and transit systems are the mode most commonly attacked." More recently, on February 29, 2008, the Office of Intelligence of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) released a report concluding that public transportation in America remains vulnerable to terrorist attack. The report states: "The volume of previous attacks and recent plotting against mass transit systems overseas demonstrates continued strong terrorist interest in targeting this sector." The report further states that: "Previous rail attacks in Madrid, London, and Mumbai could inspire terrorists to conduct similar attacks in the United States."

APTA supports the efforts of the committee to continue its oversight of the delays associated with the approval of grants and the release of transit security grant funds. Many agencies remain frustrated with a process that has been inconsistent from year to year and fails to meet the goals and intent of the program – to provide investments in transit security in a risk-based and timely manner. However, these delays in the grant making process should not result in a reduction of resources available to the growing population of public transportation riders.

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We appreciate your past support in providing financial resources for the security of our country's public transportation infrastructure, and we urge you to restore this important funding as the bill moves to the full committee. We look forward to working with you on transit security issues in the coming months. Please have your staff contact Brian Tynan of APTA's Government Affairs Department at (202) 496-4897 or email btynan@apta.com if you have any questions about this matter or if we can provide any further information.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "William Millar".

William Millar
President

WWM/tjj