

AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION
FACT SHEET
H.R. 8870, THE BUILD AMERICA 250 ACT
BUS OPERATOR WORKSTATIONS
June 15, 2026

[H.R. 8870, the “BUILD America 250 Act”](#), as amended, requires the installation of barriers to fully enclose bus operator workstations on new fixed route buses. It also establishes a Working Group to consider requiring the retrofit of existing buses with workstation barriers.

Summary

Operator Workstations

Section 3102 of [H.R. 8870](#), as amended, requires the operator workstation of a newly manufactured fixed route transit bus that is 30 feet or more in length and purchased with Federal funds by a Chapter 53 recipient to be equipped with a workstation barrier that, at a minimum:

- extends from the floor to the ceiling;
- is capable of fully enclosing the workstation and preventing the unwanted entry of persons, fluids, and objects into the workstation; and
- does not impede the operator’s lines of sight from the workstation to the exterior of the bus.

The barrier installation on new bus purchases is required beginning two years after the date of enactment of the bill, and the Secretary of Transportation shall issue Policy Guidance regarding this mandate.

Working Group

[H.R. 8870](#) requires the Secretary to establish a Working Group to review transit bus design and safety standards, and current transit agency practices regarding retrofitting and procuring transit buses with workstation barriers to protect operators from the risk of assault.¹ Specifically, the Working Group is responsible for evaluating barrier designs, including the cost of procuring and installing various designs on newly manufactured and to retrofit existing vehicles.

¹ The Secretary shall appoint a Chair and members of the Working Group, which shall be composed of at least one representative from the constituencies of transit bus manufacturers, rural transit agencies, urban transit agencies, transit bus workers, transit bus maintenance technicians, labor unions representing transit workers, and other stakeholders.

The Working Group is also tasked with:

- Gathering insights from transit agencies and operators that are using barriers, including agencies that have retrofitted existing vehicles;
- Assessing a random sample of safety management systems to determine the efficacy of those systems in identifying the risks of operator assaults and applying mitigations to reduce the risks;
- Reviewing the ability of optional features (e.g., security cameras on buses) to improve worker safety; and
- Determining the cost, feasibility, and safety benefits of requiring installation of barriers on fixed route buses less than 30 feet.

The Working Group shall make specific recommendations to the Secretary on whether the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) should develop performance specifications for operator workstations barriers and require transit agencies to retrofit buses. Not later than one year after the Secretary establishes the Working Group, the Chair shall submit a report to Congress on the Working Group's findings and recommendations. DOT shall submit a subsequent report to Congress on its position on each of the Working Group's recommendations, including the rationale for any disagreement.

APTA Position

On May 20, 2026, APTA sent a [letter](#) to leaders of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I Committee) expressing its serious concern about mandating specific safety technologies, such as fully enclosed bus workstations, in a one-size-fits-all approach. In addition, the letter noted that any consideration of requiring the retrofit of existing buses with workstation barriers could lead to mandating new bus enclosures on more than 62,000 buses in public transit agency fleets today.²

Under current law, the Safety Committee of each large transit agency, which includes an equal number of agency management and front-line worker representatives, is required to consider bus enclosures as part of the development of its annual Agency Safety Plan when recommended as part of an agency's risk assessment.³ **In its [letter](#), APTA expressed its willingness to work with the T&I Committee to explore opportunities to utilize public transit agency's existing Safety Committee structure and Safety Management Systems to determine whether to adopt specific technologies, such as fully enclosed bus workstations, for bus procurements.**

² Federal Transit Administration, National Transit Database, Revenue Vehicle Inventory (Report Year 2024).

³ See 49 U.S.C. 5329(d)(1)(I), requiring public transit agencies serving a large urbanized area (i.e., population of 200,000 or more) to develop a risk reduction program as part of their Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans. That program must include, among other items, an agency's plan to mitigate assaults on transit workers, including considering the use of barriers to restrict access to bus operator workstations, when a risk analysis performed by an agency's Safety Committee determines that the use of barriers would reduce assaults.