



**AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION**  
**FACT SHEET**  
**H.R. 4900, THE SAFE TRANSIT ACCOUNTABILITY ACT**  
*August 13, 2025*

On August 5, 2025, Rep. Lloyd Smucker (R-PA), together with Rep. Burgess Owens (R-UT), introduced [H.R. 4900, the “Safe Transit Accountability Act”](#), which strengthens Federal transit safety compliance by establishing clear executive authority within public transit agencies for rider and operator safety.

**The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) strongly supports the bill and urges Congress to enact H.R. 4900, the Safe Transit Accountability Act.**

## **Summary**

H.R. 4900 provides transit agency CEOs with clear statutory authority to ensure compliance with safety mandates when Safety Committees reach impasses. Under the bill, the Accountable Executive will have final authority over a public transit agency’s Safety Plan and Transit Asset Management Plan, including the human and capital resources necessary to implement them.

By assigning dispute resolution and final decision-making authority to the Accountable Executive, the bill enhances coordination, cuts through bureaucratic gridlock, and ensures timely, evidence-based responses to emerging safety issues.

## **Background**

Safety is the public transit industry’s most important mission, and APTA is a leader on public transit and passenger rail safety, including implementing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act’s (IIJA) statutory changes to the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) and other new safety requirements.

Specifically, the IIJA amends the Federal Transit Administration’s PTASP requirements (49 U.S.C. § 5329(d)) to require section 5307 recipients that serve:

- a small urbanized area (i.e., an urbanized area of fewer than 200,000 people), the agency safety plan be developed in cooperation with frontline employee representatives; and
- a large urbanized area (i.e., an urbanized area of 200,000 or more people), an agency must establish a Safety Committee that is:
  - convened by a joint labor-management process;
  - consists of an equal number of frontline employee representatives (selected by a labor organization) and management representatives;
  - required to approve the agency safety plan or any updates to it.

In its PTASP Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), FTA stated that an agency's PTASP must address "[h]ow the Safety Committee will manage disputes and tie votes to ensure it carries out its operations."<sup>1</sup> FTA indicated that the decision-making as to who can be designated to resolve disputes should be left to the Safety Committees. In its comments to the NPRM, APTA strongly recommended that FTA explicitly identify that the Accountable Executive is the final decision-maker in all matters concerning the Safety Committee, from adopting dispute resolution rules to executing the tie-breaking vote in the event of an impasse in the Committee. APTA noted that this approach is entirely consistent with the definition of Accountable Executive, which states that the Accountable Executive is the "single, identifiable person who has ultimate responsibility for carrying out the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan of a transit agency...."<sup>2</sup>

On April 11, 2024, FTA issued its final PTASP rule. FTA did not adopt APTA's recommendation. In fact, it adopted an approach that is directly contrary to APTA's recommendation. FTA's final rule **prohibits** the Accountable Executive of a public transit agency from serving in a tie-breaking role as part of Safety Committee dispute resolution procedures under any circumstance; and removes an Accountable Executive's decision-making authority regarding safety risk mitigations in the required safety risk reduction program.<sup>3</sup>

On May 13, 2024, APTA filed a [Petition for Reconsideration](#) of FTA's final PTASP rule. To date, FTA has not responded to APTA's petition.

On May 18, 2025, the APTA Legislative Committee adopted APTA Surface Transportation Authorization *Recommendations* that included a specific provision to explicitly identify in statute that the Accountable Executive is the final decision-maker in all matters concerning the PTASP Safety Committee.

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<sup>1</sup> FTA, [Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking](#), 88 FR 25336 (April 26, 2023) (PTASP NPRM).

<sup>2</sup> [APTA PTASP NPRM Comments \(June 26, 2023\)](#), at 3.

<sup>3</sup> FTA, [Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans Final Rule](#), 89 Fed. Reg. 25694 (April 11, 2024).