

NEWS from the T&I DEMOCRATS

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Democratic Caucus

U.S. House of Representatives, 2163 Rayburn HOB, Washington, DC 20515

www.house.gov/transportation_democrats

For Immediate Release: Tuesday, September 26, 2006

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Ranking T&I Democrat Denounces Republican Rail And Transit Security Plan

WASHINGTON—Rep. James L. Oberstar, Ranking Democrat on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, today issued the following statement:

Last night, House Republicans delivered what was characterized as a “House offer” to the Senate on the rail and public transit security provisions of the Senate-passed port security bill (H.R. 4954). House Democrats were not consulted on the offer.

The offer proposes that transit agencies conduct vulnerability assessments and security plans, even though major transit agencies have already conducted these assessments and developed these plans over the past five years.

The offer is limited to paperwork and planning requirements and does not authorize any funding for critical transit and rail security investments. It does not authorize any funding to hire additional rail security inspectors. Currently, there are approximately 100 Transportation Security Administration inspectors responsible for the security of the 140,000-mile freight and passenger railroad system. The offer also fails to require rail and transit systems to train their employees on how to prevent, prepare for, and respond to a terrorist attack.

In the wake of the Madrid, London, and Mumbai rail and transit terrorist attacks, House Republicans propose to protect our Nation’s rail and transit systems with paperwork. Despite the fact that Congress has invested only a penny per passenger for our Nation’s transit riders, the House Republican “offer” does not authorize any funding for critical security investments and training that are necessary to protect the more than 14 million people who ride our rail and transit systems each and every day.

The House Republican offer

- **Authorizes No Funding for Critical Transit Security Investments.** Despite the fact that Congress has invested only a penny per passenger for our Nation’s transit riders over the past five years, the offer does not authorize any funding for critical

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Oberstar/Port Security

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- transit security investments and training. The American Public Transportation Association, which represents public transit agencies and commuter railroads, has well-documented transit security needs that exceed \$6 billion, including more than \$5.2 billion of capital investment security needs. The offer also ignores the documented security needs of the over-the-road bus industry, a critical component of the public transportation sector, particularly in rural America, and the target of numerous terrorist attacks overseas
- **Authorizes No Funding for Critical Rail Security Investments.** Similarly, the offer does not authorize any funding for passenger rail security investments. Amtrak has specifically requested more than \$100 million in security upgrades and nearly \$600 million for fire and life-safety improvements to tunnels on the Northeast Corridor in New York, Maryland, and Washington, DC. The Department of Transportation Inspector General has confirmed the importance of these critical life-safety improvements for Amtrak.
 - **Authorizes No Funding to Hire Additional Rail Security Inspectors.** The offer does not authorize any funding to hire more rail security inspectors. Currently, there are approximately 100 Transportation Security Administration rail security inspectors responsible for the security of the 144,000 route-mile freight and passenger railroad system.
 - **Fails to Require Employee Training for Terrorist Attacks.** The offer fails to require rail and transit systems to train their employees on how to prevent, prepare for, and respond to a terrorist attack.
 - **Fails to Require National Rail and Transit Security Plan.** The offer fails to require development and implementation of a national rail and transit security plan to clarify the roles and responsibilities of federal, state, and local agencies in securing rail and transit systems, and create a framework for resuming operations in the event of a terrorist attack.
 - **Provides No Whistleblower Protections.** The offer fails to provide any protection from retaliation for rail and transit workers who report security risks or violations.

We call upon our colleagues in the majority to work with us and write a bill that provides real security for our railroads and transit systems, not the illusion of security their proposal will bring.

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