

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

March 5, 2007

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
H 218
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Price
Chairman
Homeland Security Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
B 307 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Ranking Member
Homeland Security Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington, 20515

Dear Chairman Obey, Ranking Member Lewis, Chairman Price and Ranking Member Rogers:

As you work on the Fiscal Year 2008 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Bill, we urge you to provide a robust increase in funding for the intercity passenger rail, freight rail, and transit security grant program in the Office of Grants and Training, State and Local Programs.

Following the terrible events of September 11, 2001, our nation took unprecedented steps to secure our nation's airlines. Congress has continued to provide the needed level of funding to ensure that our nation's airlines are some of the safest in the world. We strongly support this important funding. However, transit security grant programs remain badly underfunded given both the volume of riders carried each day and the known terrorist threat to such passengers.

For example, the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) estimates that since 9/11, our government has invested \$7.53 in aviation security improvements per passenger boarding, but only \$0.008 (less than one penny) in public transportation security improvements per passenger boarding.

Every weekday, more than 14 million people use public transportation, and more than 25 million passengers ride Amtrak each year. Yet, we still have far more to do to protect rail and transit travelers from terrorist attacks. And the threat is real.

Since 2004, terrorist cells have conducted successful and deadly bombings on major passenger rail systems in Spain (2004), the United Kingdom (2005), and India (2006), with 450 people killed and 2800 wounded. We know al Qaeda and like-minded groups desire to repeat such attacks here in America.

The Congress took a positive step last year when it raised rail and transit security funding from \$150 million to \$175 million. However, if we are to prevent the tragedies that occurred in Madrid, London, and Mumbai from being repeated in America, we must act now to ensure that our local transit providers have the resources they need to protect the millions of Americans who rely on rail service. In 2004, the APTA outlined \$6 billion in needs for transit agency security-related investments. A 2002 Government Accountability Office study of just eight transit systems that had completed security assessments found that needed upgrades would cost at least \$700 million.

Regrettably, the President's FY2008 budget request for rail and transit security provides no increase in funding over last year's levels. We believe that additional funding is urgently needed to meet this ongoing threat to our public transportation systems. Accordingly, we ask that you provide a robust increase in funding for the intercity passenger rail, freight rail, and transit security grant program in the Office of Grants and Training, State and Local Programs.

We look forward to working with you on these important issues. Please feel free to contact us if we can be of assistance.

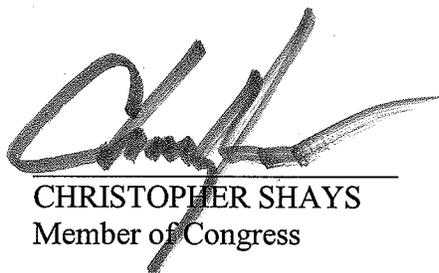
Sincerely,



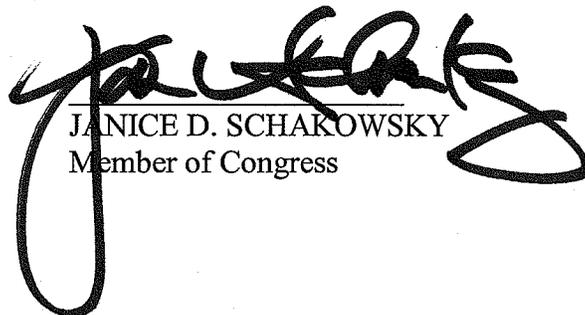
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Member of Congress



CHRISTOPHER SHAYS
Member of Congress



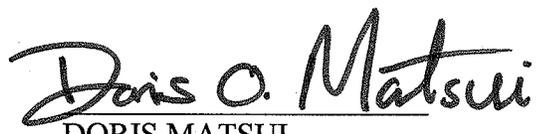
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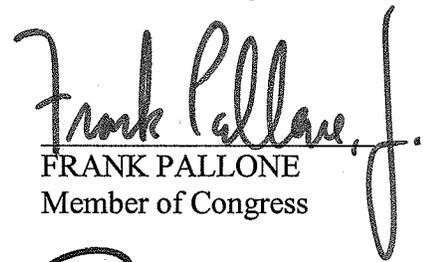

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