

Amendment is part of larger Intelligence Authorization bill for FY2011

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WASHINGTON — An amendment introduced by Rep. John Carney to make rail security a priority in intelligence agency planning and budgeting passed the House today 221-189 with both Democratic and Republican support. Preliminary intelligence gathered from Osama bin Laden's Pakistan hideout shows that Al-Qaeda had been plotting a terrorist attack on the nation's rail system.

"Today's legislation will ensure that the U.S. government places a priority on ensuring the safety of rail passengers around the country by working to prevent a terrorist attack on our rail system," said Rep. Carney. "It directs Congress to include railway transportation in the development of transportation security plans and budgets by the intelligence community."

The successful amendment is part of the Intelligence Authorization bill, which provides policy guidance and authorizes classified funding levels for 16 U.S. intelligence agencies, including the CIA, the National Security Agency, and the Defense Intelligence Agency, and for other intelligence-related activities of the federal government. Today, the Intelligence Authorization bill passed the House with broad bipartisan support.

In the recently passed 2011 budget agreement, rail and port security funding was cut by \$50 million. That represents a 20 percent decrease in funding from FY2010. Transit agencies use this federal money to hire law enforcement officers, acquire bomb-sniffing dogs, and install explosive screening devices. They also use the money to finance capital projects that keep riders safe, such as strengthening tunnels, installing surveillance systems, and establishing perimeter security controls

“The 9/11 Commission Report found that over 90 percent of the nation’s annual investment in transportation security is spent on aviation security,” said Rep. Carney. “While addressing security vulnerabilities within aviation is critical, this allocation leaves too little for surface transportation security, particularly on our rail systems.

While roughly 1.7 million passengers ride in domestic and international flights daily, every weekday, 34 million Americans ride on trains and transit systems.

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