



LINCOLN CHAFEE

U.S. SENATOR

RHODE ISLAND

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, May 6, 2004

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TRANSPORTATION TERRORISM PREVENTION ACT

APPROVED BY BANKING COMMITTEE

CHAFEE COSPONSOR OF ACT

WASHINGTON, DC – The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs today approved the Public Transportation Terrorism Prevention Act, which was cosponsored by U.S. Senator Lincoln Chafee. The bipartisan bill will create a needs-based grant program within the Department of Homeland Security to identify risks and vulnerabilities within transit systems across the country. The Department will then be required to develop strategies for alleviating those risks and create a framework for government agency coordination.

“With the security risks the country faces, we must do everything we can to protect the safety of all Americans,” Chafee said. “This bill is a huge step towards making our bridges, tunnels, and other means of transportation more secure. With an Amtrak tunnel running under the U.S. Supreme Court and six tunnels to New York’s Penn Station directly under office buildings, an enormous security liability is being ignored. Through more safeguarded infrastructure and improved communication, this legislation will go a long way in defending our people from any threats that may arise,” Chafee continued.

The bill will provide funding for the more than 3.9 million miles of roads, 100,00 miles of rail, 600,000 bridges, 300 ports, and nearly a thousand train and subway stations in three ways:

- The Capital Grant Program would provide \$3.5 billion for security infrastructure such as tunnel protection systems, surveillance fencing, communications and tracking equipment, and detection systems for chemical, biological, radiological, and explosive agents.

- The Operation Grant Fund would provide \$1.5 billion over the next three years for security training for transit employees, public awareness campaigns, canine patrols, and costs associated with events of national security or international importance. The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority will be assessed for security risks under this Fund with the opportunity to apply for grants for improvements that address those risks.
- Finally, the Research Grant Fund would provide \$200 million for the study of chemical, biological, radiological or explosive detection technologies, imaging technologies, and others that could deter potential terrorist threats.

In addition, the legislation would delineate which department would retain which specific responsibilities in public transportation and would clarify the relationship between the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Department of Transportation. It would also direct the DHS to establish a framework for determining security improvement priorities for each individual transit agency that is determined to be at risk for a terrorist attack.

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