



# NEWS RELEASE

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## DHS Misses Deadline in 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act

### *Transportation Workers Still Untrained Due to Agency Inaction*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Transportation unions are outraged that security training for thousands of frontline transit workers across the nation will be delayed again in the wake of another missed deadline by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

“Transportation workers will be left to fend for themselves simply because the DHS has again defied a Congressional directive,” said Edward Wytkind, President of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO. “The 9/11 Commission bill signed into law didn’t ask the DHS to establish worker training regulations – it directed them to.”

It has been six years since 9/11, and three major rail and transit systems have been successfully attacked by terrorists since then – in Mumbai, India in 2006, in London in 2005, and in Madrid in 2004. After years of fighting to make security training mandatory for frontline public transportation workers, the deadline for issuing initial regulations for new training programs came and went yesterday, Nov. 1, 2007.

“Securing our rail and mass transit systems is critical to the nation’s overall security. While we understand that many of the deadlines set forth by the 9/11 bill are strict, the Department cannot use strict deadlines as an excuse for inaction,” said House Homeland Security Chairman Bennie Thompson.

“We have repeatedly engaged the Department on issues of rail and mass transit frontline security workers. It is disappointing that they have failed to deliver on this initial step -- coming up with interim final regulations on the elements of the security training program. This is essential to getting an effective security training program online for those workers who will be the first to respond in the event of an attack. This committee is discouraged by this and is not yet convinced that the Department takes surface transportation security seriously,” Thompson said.

Dealing with extremely tight budgets, experience shows that leaving the choice up to individual transit agencies over whether or not to conduct security training does not lead to a sufficient number of workers being trained. The Bush Administration put up roadblocks to prevent making security training mandatory until Congress finally refused to take no for an answer and produced the comprehensive legislation that was enacted in August.

Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO

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“One of the core lessons of the tragedy of 9/11 is that we need to prepare for any possible threat before it happens and lives are lost. It is stunning that our nation’s Department of Homeland Security would miss this deadline,” said Senator Chris Dodd, whose first hearing as Chairman of the Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee was on transit security and who authored a comprehensive new transit security law that was enacted as part of the 9/11 bill earlier this year.

“Experts agree that the most effective way to prevent a terrorist transit attack and limit the scope of any tragedy if terrorists were to strike is to have well-trained and prepared transit workers, especially those who work every day in and on our nation’s busses, subways, and light rail lines. It is simply unacceptable for the DHS to drag their feet on these regulations. Every hour that they delay puts our nation’s transit riders and those who live and work in our cities and urban areas at greater risk,” Dodd said.

Passengers rely on workers to safeguard rail and transit systems by monitoring and responding to suspicious behavior and leading emergency response and evacuation.

“With this missed deadline, we continue to lack a national standard for transit agencies developing their security training programs,” Wytkind said. “The unfortunate truth is that this Administration is famous for saying many of the right things on homeland security when people are listening. But when the cameras aren’t rolling, the agency fails to follow through. We will be watching closely and working with our elected leaders in Congress to hold the DHS accountable for its missed deadlines.”

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*The Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, represents 32 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, trucking, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. For more information, visit [www.ttd.org](http://www.ttd.org).*