



NEWS RELEASE

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Congress Finally Ends Bush Administration Neglect of Transportation Security

WASHINGTON, DC – *Edward Wytkind, President of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO, offers the following statement on Senate and House passage of the 9/11 Commission Recommendations Act of 2007:*

“Congress has finally taken aggressive steps to shore up many security risks in our transportation system after years of Bush Administration inaction since the September 11 terrorist attacks.

“Our repeated calls to close gaping security holes in the transportation system, especially in the transit, bus and rail sectors, were ignored by the Bush Administration. But this new Congress has spoken. It will send legislation to the President’s Desk that mandates what we have called for since 9/11: mandatory security training for front-line workers; strong whistleblower protections; and new federal resources to assist public and private sector transportation employers in protecting passengers, our economy and the general public from terrorist threats.

“This legislation also takes steps to address major security risks from U.S. air carriers’ epidemic outsourcing of maintenance to virtually un-regulated and rarely inspected foreign repair facilities.

“Unfortunately, this bill puts into law standards embodied in the Transportation Security Administration’s Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program that will be used to disqualify port and other transportation workers that do not pose a terrorism security risk. We wonder why Congress is allowing this program to drift off course from its primary objective.

“It is also disturbing that the President’s heavy hand and Senate acquiescence have resulted in dropping a provision to permit Federal airport security screeners to form and join a union. For decades, union members throughout the Federal government have served and defended the public. There is no contradiction between protecting the security of air travelers and belonging to a union. We will continue to urge Congress to correct this injustice.”

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TTD represents 32 member unions in the aviation, rail, transit, trucking, highway, longshore, maritime and related industries. For more information, visit www.ttd.org.

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