

RUSH HOLT
Twelfth District, New Jersey

1019 Longworth Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
202-225-5801
Fax 202-225-6025

50 Washington Road
West Windsor, NJ 08550
609-750-9365
Fax 609-750-0618

website and e-mail:
www.holt.house.gov



Congress of the United States

December 11, 2008

Chair
Select Intelligence Oversight Panel
Committee on Appropriations

Committee on Education
and Labor

Permanent Select Committee
on Intelligence

Committee on Natural Resources

Co-Chair
Children's Environmental Health Caucus
Congressional Research and
Development Caucus

Joseph H. Boardman
President and CEO
Amtrak
60 Massachusetts Ave., NE
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Boardman,

It has come to my attention that members of the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees in the Rail Division of the Teamsters have, for more than a year, repeatedly raised concerns about the lack of physical security measures at a number of Amtrak facilities.

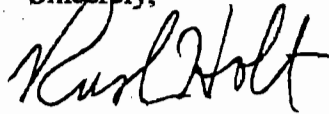
As last month's terrorist attacks in Mumbai, India have demonstrated, rail facilities remain targets of terrorists. Let me list for you just three among many Amtrak facilities that would make ideal terrorist targets today because of their alleged lack of security and that should have your immediate attention:

- **Dock Tower and Bridge.** Immediately east (towards New York) of Newark's Penn Station is a large moveable bridge over the Passaic River. Well over six hundred Amtrak and New Jersey Transit trains pass over this bridge each day, as well as hundreds more PATH trains. On the eastern side of the river, and the north side of the railroad right of way there is an access road from Harrison, New Jersey which leads to a ramp running directly into the tracks and the bridge. I have been told that there are no security measures employed at this site, even solid fencing.
- **Sunnyside Yard in Queens, New York.** There are 3 entrances (1 pedestrian and 2 vehicle) to this railroad facility, which is among the largest and busiest passenger rail preparation yard in the eastern United States. Although there are security booths at the 3 locations, I understand they are frequently unmanned and access is unrestricted. I have been told that there is very limited Amtrak police presence in the yard.
- **Corridor from Union to Metropark train station in Iselin, NJ.** Amtrak's right of way in this area runs along a 5 to 6 mile stretch of New Jersey's Route 27. I have been told that there is very little fencing and few guard rails or barriers along

this easily accessible right of way, thus making the railroad infrastructure in the area vulnerable to terrorist attack, criminal mischief or highway mishaps.

During the 110th Congress, I led the effort to increase funding for rail and transit security by more than double, from \$175 million to \$400 million dollars for Fiscal Year 2008 alone. Another \$400 million has been included in the Fiscal Year 2009 budget. Congress wants to see real security improvements at Amtrak facilities. Accordingly, I ask that you meet with me to explain in detail Amtrak's plan for improving security throughout the system, including at the three sites listed above. I also ask that representatives of the union be included in the meeting. If there are federal regulatory or other bottlenecks that are impeding your efforts to move forward with security upgrades, please provide me with a list of such issues at our meeting so I can help you through legislative or other means as appropriate. I look forward to working with you to ensure the safety and security of Amtrak's passengers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rush Holt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

RUSH HOLT
Member of Congress