

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for holding this hearing. You and I discussed the need for just such a hearing two weeks ago, and so I commend your leadership in making it happen.

And make no mistake about it, we have a real need for better security and cargo screening equipment in our nation's sea ports and border crossings. The numbers speak for themselves Mr. Chairman. Since enactment of NAFTA, commerce between Canada and the United States has tripled while the number of Customs inspectors at our borders have remained the same. More than 2 billion tons of freight enter our ports and harbors each year and prior to September 11, only slightly more than one percent of those cargo containers were inspected by either the Coast Guard, Customs, or Immigration and Naturalization officials.

There is no doubt that we need to improve security at our borders. At the same time we need to invest in the infrastructure and technologies, such as x-ray machines that would allow us to more easily inspect shipping containers and detect bombs, chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. All bags and cargo that enter this country via aircraft are screened by x-ray machines and are often searched both at the originating country and when the aircraft reaches the United States. Surely the same standard should apply for all cargo entering the United States via freighter, trucks and trains. We should insist upon security measures in the country of origin and have security measure in place in U.S., ports for inbound containers.

I also want to mention the very clear need that we have when it comes to improving passenger rail security and safety. Amtrak's ridership is up more than 10 percent in the wake of the September 11 attacks. On the Acela Express, which prior to September 11 had been capturing about 42% of the New York-Washington business traveler market, reservations are up 40% since the 11th. As a result of this new demand, Amtrak has added 608 seats during peak periods on the Northeast Corridor.

And it should not escape the notice of this subcommittee that Amtrak's ridership in the West is up 8%, while business on long-haul trains is 15% greater than normal. These figures indicate that passenger rail safety and security should be a priority for members who do not happen to represent northeastern states – which I note is the case for almost the entire rest of the subcommittee.

I know Amtrak is seeking an additional \$3 billion in funding for a series of much-needed security and safety improvements. I certainly support those efforts, and I hope we can get them this money. Travelers on the Northeast Corridor and beyond counted on Amtrak to get them around during the time our nation's airspace was shut down, and almost a month later, it's clear that many people want the option of a reliable, national train service.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank the Coast Guard for activating the reserve 307th Port Security Unit from St. Petersburg, Florida and sending the

147 man unit to augment security in Boston Harbor. This unit is one of only six reserve port security units nationwide. With only one day's notice, the 307th had their fleet of six fast, heavily armed Boston Whaler patrol boats - hauled from Florida via flatbed trucks - launched in Boston Harbor, ready for 24-hour security patrols. While the Coast Guard uses its larger patrol boats and cutters outside the harbor, the small boats from Florida are being used primarily for patrol and escort duty, sailing beside tankers and cruise ships as they enter or leave the harbor. Given the events of September 11, perhaps we should reexamine the number of units we have to call upon in times of national security. This is something I want to look into at future hearings on the Coast Guard.

Finally, I would like to make a few comments concerning the shipment of liquid natural gas into Boston Harbor. There have been no weekly shipments since September 11. Nearly 20% of the natural gas needs of New England enter the port of Boston via double hull tankers that chill natural gas to 260 degrees below zero to compress methane to 1/600th of its normal volume as vapor. For 30 years these shipments have occurred in Boston, with the tankers provided safety escorts by the Coast Guard as they dock at the storage facility terminal in Everett. If we had to build it today, we obviously would have located the storage facility in a different location -- certainly not within one mile of the Revere Beach Parkway and residential neighborhoods in Charlestown, Chelsea, and Everett. Tankers coming up through the inner harbor pass within a mile of Boston's Financial District. In the long term,

perhaps we should look to relocate these facilities, so that in the event of a terrorist attack or accident, the threat to local residential communities is minimal. Given the events of September 11, I believe it is wise to review our security and safety plans for the safe passage of these tankers in Boston. I also agree with Governor Swift's assessment that it is a matter of "when" these shipments will occur as opposed to "if."

The Coast Guard is to be commended for pulling together all of the appropriate state and local agencies and forming a unified command in Boston. This unified command, working closely with area emergency response agencies, has identified safety concerns in connection with the new threat of terrorism that are not adequately addressed in local response planning. I am confident that the unified command will update liquid natural gas tanker safety and security procedures in the port of Boston so that deliveries can resume before colder temperatures hit the Northeast.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.