

United States Senate

HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
SUITE 112
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0505
(202) 224-3553

June 22, 2009

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairman
Transportation, Housing and
Urban Development
Appropriations Subcommittee
142 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Christopher Bond
Ranking Member
Transportation, Housing and
Urban Development
Appropriations Subcommittee
128 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Madam Chairman Murray and Ranking Member Bond:

We respectfully request that the railroad safety technology grants program authorized in the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (RSIA) (P.L. 110-432) be fully funded, at a minimum, in the Fiscal Year 2010 (FY10) Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill. These grants were authorized at \$50 million for FY10. This new program will provide critical funding for the implementation of positive train control and other necessary safety improvements.

Last October, Congress passed the RSIA following the tragic collision of a commuter rail train and a freight train in Southern California that killed 25 people and left 138 injured. Based on the facts revealed in the National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) initial accident investigation, if positive train control had been installed on the tracks that are shared by commuter and freight rail trains, the accident could have been prevented. RSIA requires that positive train control be implemented on main lines where intercity passenger rail and commuter rail trains operate and over which poison-or toxic-by-inhalation hazardous materials are transported.

More commuters are turning to commuter rail today than ever before. In these tough economic times, with many commuter rail agencies facing budget cuts, funding for the railroad safety technology grants is vital to ensure that important safety measures continue to be implemented.

We cannot afford to delay the implementation of positive train control and other life saving safety measures on our nation's busiest commuter-freight rail corridors. We respectfully request you fully fund the railroad safety technology grants for FY10, at a minimum, at the authorized amount. Thank you for your consideration of this important request.

Sincerely,


Barbara Boxer
United States Senator


John D. Rockefeller IV
United States Senator