

Castle Foreign Rail Security Amendment Passes House in 9/11 Bill -- July 27, 2007

Washington, D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle today voted to support H.R. 1, the 9/11 Commission Act, which implements the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. The bill passed the House in January, and since then it has been improved with the addition of the rail security provisions, which include Rep. Castle's amendment requiring the implementation of rail security techniques used in Europe and Asia. While the bill claims to include all the 9/11 Commission recommendations, it fails to reform congressional oversight of intelligence - which was a key determination of the Commission's report. Rep. Castle has introduced legislation, H.R. 334, which would enact this remaining recommendation.

"I am concerned that we have missed a key opportunity to truly enact all of the 9/11 Report's recommendations, especially those gaping holes in the congressional oversight of intelligence spending. However, the bill before us will make key improvements, and I commend the conference committee for taking much needed steps to enhance rail security in the U.S. In particular, my amendment to require the government to model U.S. rail security after techniques that have proven effective in places like London and Hong Kong will be vital in enhancing security here at home. I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation and I call on the leadership in Congress to act immediately to address the remaining issues that continue to face our national security system."

The legislation upgrades our national preparedness system, and makes key improvements in the areas of port, rail, transit, and aviation security. The bill also requires all imported seaborne cargo containers to be scanned by July 2012 and requires all cargo on passenger aircrafts to be screened within three years. The legislation authorizes \$1.6 billion for a new interoperable communications grants through the Department of Homeland Security and \$4 million over the next four years for rail, transit, and bus security grant programs under the Department of Homeland Security. Additionally, it provides protection against lawsuits for people who report suspicious activities to authorities.

In addition, Rep. Castle's Rail Security provisions in the bill will:

- Require the Department of Homeland Security to assess key foreign rail security practices that are not currently used in the U.S.;
- Include provisions from Castle's legislation, H.R. 4106, the Railroad Security and Public Awareness Act, which will implement a mandatory rail security training program to prepare front-line employees for potential threat conditions; and
- Incorporate another provision from H.R. 4106 to require the Department of Homeland Security to conduct outreach campaigns for railroad security, including

educational initiatives designed to inform the public on how to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from a terrorist attack on railroad transportation.

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