

CASTLE APPLAUDS AMTRAK'S NEW RAIL SECURITY MEASURES -- FEBRUARY 19, 2008

Washington, DC -- Today, Rep. Michael N. Castle (R-DE) responded to Amtrak's announcement that they are implementing new security procedures to ensure passenger safety and minimize the risk of security threats. These changes were modeled after the New York Subway System's security procedure. Amtrak passengers will now be subject to random baggage screenings, and officers with dogs will be stationed on all train platforms. According to Amtrak, this new inspection procedure will not cause passenger delay. Rep. Mike Castle, a long-time advocate for railway safety and sponsor of the Rail Security and Public Awareness Act, is pleased to see Amtrak taking such proactive measures to keep Americans safe.

"While the concept of 'rail security' is relatively new here at home, security officials in Europe and Asia have decades of experience with terrorist attacks, and I have long believed in the importance of leveraging this experience to improve our own system," Castle said. "Since the attacks on our country in 2001, I have been pushing for greater attention to these foreign rail security practices, and last summer the President signed key provisions of my rail security bill into law as part of legislation to implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. Random screening of rail passengers is just one of several techniques outlined in my legislation that have proven effective both overseas and in the New York subway system.

"I support Amtrak's efforts to introduce this security technique as part of a comprehensive new initiative to improve the safety of travelers in Delaware and along the entire Northeast Corridor. Obviously security at train stations is very different from procedures used at airports, and it is critical that Amtrak make certain these new techniques do not cause long lines or security delays. I ride the train almost daily when the House of Representatives is in session, and I plan to work closely with Amtrak and my colleagues in Congress to ensure these new procedures are successful and unobtrusive for passengers."

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