



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY



**TESTIMONY BEFORE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND
SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

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June 22, 2011

Chairmen Lieberman and Ranking Member Collins, members of the Committee, good morning and thank you for inviting me here today. My name is Peter Boynton and I am the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. Previously, I was the Federal Security Director for TSA at Connecticut's Bradley International Airport, also served as the Coast Guard Captain of the Port in New Haven, Connecticut, and before that, served on the National Security Council staff here in Washington.

First, I want to thank the partners that work together in Connecticut to enhance homeland security, and specifically mass transit security, including the MTA and Amtrak police in Connecticut, TSA, Coast Guard, Connecticut State Police, Connecticut Department of Transportation, the local first responders who patrol and respond to these mass transit corridors every day, DHS for support of, among other things, the Connecticut State Fusion Center, and the importance of continued support from our FBI partners. Thanking our partners includes thanking the public, both the riders and the surrounding residents who are participating in security through a sustained "See Something Say Something" campaign that we launched last fall.

I am here to offer a state perspective on transit security and particularly rail security. There are four themes that I would like to emphasize today: first, the benefit of balancing large city rail security with rail security for the surrounding communities that feed into that same rail system; second, how the evolving terrorist threat drives the need for transit security for both urban areas and the communities which surround them; third, the importance of information sharing and communications in this terrorist threat environment, and; fourth, next steps to enhance the role of the public as a vital partner in rail security.

Connecticut has a mass transit rail system carrying over 127,000 passengers on 289 trains every day. As transit systems go, this is not among the largest, but the notable aspect of the Connecticut transit system is that it is part of the much larger New York City metropolitan area transit system. All of those Connecticut trains and most of the passengers go directly to the heart of New York City – Grand

Central Station. In 2010, there were over 37 million passenger trips from Connecticut into New York City.

The interconnected nature of mass transit means that the security of the New York City transit system relies in part on the security of the Connecticut-based portion of the transit system. Connecticut's situation is not unique. This type of feeder rail system exists elsewhere around the country, where rail lines from surrounding communities meet in the larger urban areas.

From the state perspective, however, we are increasingly seeing federal funding being shifted to large urban areas. This is happening not only with transit security grants, but also through targeted reductions in UASI grants, shifts in port security grants, and homeland security grants.

The focus on security for cities makes sense in many respects, but shrinking security funding for communities with transit links into large urban areas may have the unintended consequence of pushing the risk outside the urban area and increasing the vulnerability for terrorists to prepare outside the city for terrorist activity intended within the city. Connecticut has had real experience within its borders with this phenomenon, including the terrorists involved in the 9/11 attacks and the attempted Times Square bombing – both cases where terrorists intending to attack New York City were in Connecticut.

The challenge is to modify current federal grant criteria to include more proportionate funding for communities surrounding urban areas with connecting transit systems, rather than increasingly focusing transit grants almost exclusively within the city limits for large urban areas. The percentage of the funding needed for those surrounding communities with transit links is not large, but it must be sufficient for those communities to complete basic ongoing security measures already begun such as fencing, lighting, communications, and cameras. Connecticut is unlikely to receive any funding under the new Transit Security Grant Program criteria this year, other than potential additional public awareness funds. While that remains critical, additional funds are needed to complete ongoing security projects. In the last five years, transit security grants have successfully supported work in Connecticut to enhance transit security, with \$2 million to \$6.3 million per year or 1.5 - 2.5 percent of total transit security grants supporting Connecticut transit security. Although this is a small percentage, it has allowed Connecticut to implement important security enhancements.

In addition to modifying the grant criteria, it may help to use a variation of the Port Security grant model, in which the local Coast Guard Captain of the Port reviews and prioritizes the applications with local port users. In the case of rail security, the local Federal Security Director for TSA might take on a similar role reviewing

and ranking transit security grant applications. In this manner, the inter-connected nature of the transit systems can be recognized and grant funding proportionately distributed to avoid the unintended consequence of pushing risk out to surrounding communities.

The need for balancing grant criteria is also linked to the evolving terrorist threat. On the one hand, our federal partners are helping us to better understand the evolution of the terrorist threat. The diversification of the threat requires increased local and community involvement. At the same time, however, the other federal “hand” –the one holding the money—is increasingly shifting federal grant funds to large urban areas at the expense of smaller communities with transit links surrounding large urban areas. As feeder systems to the urban areas, Connecticut and other similar jurisdictions that are part of large metropolitan transit systems need continued federal grant support, not just to protect those within their own borders, but as part of the larger risk mitigation to the entire metropolitan transit system in places like New York City and other cities across the nation.

Balanced grant funding is just one way to achieve increased transit security. Another way is to continue to enhance information sharing between disciplines and across jurisdictions. In Connecticut, for example, we have convened a Transit Security Committee that includes transit agencies such as the Department of Transportation, MTA, Amtrak and State Police as well as representatives from all other modes of transportation, including maritime, aviation, trucking, highway and pipelines. The cross-modal interactions on this committee help to build lines of communication. We have also sought to enhance transit security by increasing the number of TSA transit security operations called VIPRs (Visible Intermodal Protection and Response). These VIPRs are an operational collaboration between TSA, transit police and local, state and federal law enforcement. TSA in Connecticut is among the top five nationally for conducting VIPRs, having increased from 34 VIPR operations in 2009, to an anticipated seven times that number by the end of 2011. Support for these VIPR transit security operations should be increased.

Our focus on enhancing transit security also includes the Connecticut State Fusion Center, where we not only have traditional partners such as DHS, the FBI and State Police, but also, since 2008, a full time TSA transportation security intelligence analyst. Connecticut’s fusion center also includes full time local police detectives, which further increases intelligence and information sharing between TSA and other partners by providing access to local police departments, and vice versa. Three recent examples highlight the importance of this relationship. First, TSA identified graffiti that was appearing on aircraft at a number of airports, including Connecticut’s Bradley Airport, which is the second largest airport in New England. The information was quickly shared with the state

fusion center through our TSA representative. This TSA analyst was also instrumental in sharing and disseminating to transportation partners statewide information learned from a neighboring fusion center regarding the tampering of rails in a local community. The TSA representative in the state fusion center quickly researched and analyzed potential connections to a recent national TSA bulletin. Finally, information on rail gate tampering from another neighboring state fusion center was analyzed and disseminated to local partners through our TSA analyst. Continued support to state fusion centers by TSA and other federal agencies is vital to achieve the level of communication and information sharing and analysis necessary to continue to enhance homeland security for transit and elsewhere.

Another way to enhance security, particularly for open transit systems such as rail lines, is to engage and educate the public. People who commute by surface modes such as rail lines tend to do so every day. These people are the experts on what is “normal” on their everyday route. That’s why Connecticut has started a long range, far-reaching “See Something, Say Something” campaign, running for at least a two-year period.

But, as the title of today’s hearing reminds us, the next critical step is to “do something.” We have made progress towards increasing transit security since 9/11, but as the threat shifts, so must the methods we use to enhance that security. Now we must take it up a notch, to institute a higher level of training and education. The question of what we should “do” should be answered, not just by government policy makers, but by practitioners such as rail conductors, engineers and other employees, first responders such as fire and police, and other members of the rail community including passengers and commercial vendors.

The public use of defibrillators as an emergency medical response tool is an example of how the public can be more fully engaged to “do something.” We have moved from a time 30 years ago when CPR training was new and rare to today when defibrillators are installed in many public places, and citizens are trained on how to use them. Similarly, we must move from being aware of security risks, with campaigns like “See Something Say Something”, to the next challenge of a more interactive preparedness. Future steps could include, for example, basic emergency response information for commuters and vendors. Moving from CPR to informing the public how to operate defibrillators was a big step towards demonstrating the public’s capacity to “do something,” and should be a model for what could be done in the homeland security arena such as transit security.

Taking this next step truly exemplifies the spirit of resiliency. Since 9/11, we have improved our ability to withstand and recover, but a key element of resiliency is also the capacity to adapt as the threat shifts. Adding the “do something” concept

is an example of adapting. The challenges of security in an open system like rail highlight that security is best when the partnerships are broad and include an engaged and educated public.

Thank you to the Committee for this opportunity to address you, and I would be glad to answer any questions you may have.