

Security legislation includes two provisions introduced by Bilirakis

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Washington, D.C. - Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-Palm Harbor), a Member of the Homeland Security Committee, lauded the bi-partisan passage of H.R. 1401, the Rail and Public Transportation Security Act, which included two security provisions he authored. The legislation passed 299 to 124.

Among other things, this important homeland security legislation would:

- Enhance the security of our nation's rail, public transportation and over-the-road bus carriers.
- Require high and medium risk transportation systems to assess their vulnerabilities and develop and implement security plans.
- Authorize security grant programs, of 6.2 billion over the next four years, to be distributed on the basis of risk, for rail, public transportation and over-the-road bus systems, to make needed security improvements.

The bill the House approved yesterday includes two provisions Rep. Bilirakis successfully inserted during the consideration of the bill by the Homeland Security Committee. The provisions would:

- Require the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to conduct physical testing of rail cars to determine the most likely successful means of attack against them. Currently, no real-world vulnerability testing has been done on the safety of tank cars carrying dangerous toxic-by-inhalation hazardous materials.
- Require the security coordinator positions required under the legislation to be filled by U.S. citizens. This is the same as the requirement for individuals seeking security clearances for access to classified information and materials.

"I applaud my colleagues in the House for joining together to pass this bi-partisan homeland security legislation," Rep. Bilirakis said. "Our country lives under the constant threat of terrorism by people who despise freedom. It is important that this Congress continues to work together to pass common sense legislation that completely and accurately assesses and addresses security threats to this country's transportation infrastructure."

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