

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-0907

July 14, 2009

The Honorable Peter Rogoff  
Administrator  
Federal Transit Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Administrator Rogoff,

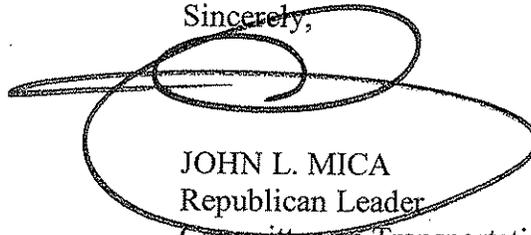
We understand that a Federal Transit Administration administrative policy prohibits transit agencies from using their federal grant funds to support expenses of the State Safety Office agencies that directly oversee the safety of transit systems.

According to a July 2006 Government Accountability Office report for the Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, these State Safety Offices are often inadequately funded and staffed. Transit is a very safe mode of transportation, and rail transit accidents are extremely rare. However, given last month's fatal accident on the Washington Metro system, the May 2008 fatal accident on the Boston Green Line trolley, and other infrequent but disturbing accidents on transit systems around the country, we feel it is important that these State Safety Offices be strengthened.

We strongly recommend that the Federal Transit Administration work with us to provide flexibility for transit agencies to utilize a percentage of their federal funds for State Safety Oversight agency support. We are also interested in any suggestions that the FTA has for improvements to safety on the nation's transit systems.

There were more than 10.7 billion transit trips in 2008. These riders deserve the highest possible level of safety. We look forward to working together with you to achieve this goal.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke.

JOHN L. MICA  
Republican Leader  
Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure