



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Todd Kaminsky

Kaminsky, commuters urge MTA to strengthen monitoring of stations & trains following terror plot

TODD KAMINSKY September 21, 2016

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In light of recent terrorist activity and the discovery of five pipe bombs inside a wastebasket near a train station in Elizabeth, New Jersey, Senator Todd Kaminsky, standing alongside commuters, today urged the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) to strengthen its video monitoring capabilities of its stations and trains to ensure the safety of its passengers and workers.

Kaminsky has written a letter to MTA Chairman and CEO Thomas Prendergast requesting the MTA's immediate action to install surveillance cameras in and around all of its train stations and cars. While the MTA is formulating plans to equip train cars and stations with cameras, Kaminsky is urging them to accelerate this plan across its transit system to ensure the immediate safety of its passengers and workers.

"We live in one of the most densely populated suburban communities in the world and our mass transit system is vulnerable to the deranged will of a "lone wolf," said Kaminsky. "Last weekend's plot and attack were yet another reminder that we must do more to prevent another terrorist attack. Installing cameras as a preventive measure will deter terrorist activities and suspicious behavior, and assist law enforcement track and locate suspects in the horrible event that an attack occurs on our transit system. Cameras are vital to enhancing the security of our system and protecting commuters, and the MTA must make it a priority to install surveillance cameras system-wide."

More than 2.7 billion people utilize the MTA's services every year, which includes the Long Island Railroad which has a ridership of 87 million per year making it the largest commuter rail in the nation.

"Over the years I've seen complacency set in as it pertains to security measures," said James Dowd, a Rockville Centre resident who commutes into New York City. "After the terrorist attacks of this past weekend the rules have changed again. Now is not the time for dawdling. The MTA needs to adjust the priority listing of camera installation. Let's not get the home security system after the break in."

Senator Kaminsky previously worked with the MTA to install cameras in the Lawrence and Cedarhurst train stations in an effort to stop hate graffiti. Equipping all train stations and cars with cameras will provide law enforcement with the ability to identify and target

criminal behavior.

Over the last few years, the United States and Europe have seen a rash of "lone wolf" terrorist attacks and public, soft target spaces are particularly vulnerable to these deadly incidents. Following the bombing in the Madrid subway bombing in 2004, the London Underground introduced surveillance cameras throughout the system. These cameras are used to aid in investigations after crimes are committed and alert police to suspicious packages and behavior.

"On Long Island we all expect that when our loved ones leave for work they will return safely. That is the first responsibility of the MTA and having greater surveillance capacity will allow them to protect the critical infrastructure that carries Long Islanders to and from NYC each day," said Kaminsky. "Security is the utmost concern for commuters and workers, and the sooner cameras can be installed, the closer we'll be to a safer transit system for all New Yorkers."