

(October 17, 2007) Lipinski Shows Strong Support of the Federal Railroad Safety Improvement Act

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Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Chairman, I thank the chairman of the committee for yielding and for all his tireless efforts on behalf of rail safety.

Mr. Chairman, today I rise in strong support of the Federal Railroad Safety Improvement Act. As the chairman says, I represent part of Chicago, which is the rail hub of the Nation. I understand just how important railroad traffic is, railroads are to this country, both passenger and freight. In all transportation, safety is key.

This bill makes crucial improvements in safety for rail employees, passengers and all Americans who live, work, travel along rail lines. I would like to commend Chairman Oberstar, Subcommittee Chairwoman Brown, Ranking Member Shuster, and Ranking Member Mica for their work on this bill.

Mr. Chairman, among the other important improvements that come in this bill, H.R. 2095 works to strengthen the integrity of our Nation's rail system, encourages the implementation of new technologies, such as positive train control systems, known as PTC. I am especially pleased that, at my request, the committee included language in the bill that provides Federal funding to expedite PTC installation. PTC systems can drastically reduce collisions, derailments and other accidents, while at the same time improving efficiency. It's clearly a much-needed advance.

I also want to speak right now in strong support of the Napolitano amendment, which broadly ensures Mexican trains entering the U.S. continue to receive proper brake, mechanical and hazardous material inspections by highly skilled American personnel.

Mr. Chairman, this bill is essential for continued safety of our railways. I urge adoption of the Napolitano amendment and passage of the underlying bill.