

**Testimony of Anthony Wayne Garland
Recording Secretary and Chief Safety Officer
Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689**

Before

The Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of Columbia

September 23, 2010 2:00 p.m.

Rayburn House Office Building Room 2203

Good afternoon Congresswoman Norton, members of the committee and others. Thank you Congresswoman Norton, for inviting ATU Local 689, the largest transit workers union in the nation's capitol and the 3rd largest transit union in the nation, to testify before your committee.

I am here today to speak on behalf of the union's President, Jackie Jeter and our members. Over the past several years, we have made several recommendations to WMATA that we expect will improve management, employee preparedness, rider and worker safety, and service to the public. Please allow me to explain some of the most important. We believe these are consistent with the proposed federal legislation:

1. Development of a comprehensive safety plan that mirrors the proposed national plan. The WMATA plan should result from a collaborative effort between WMATA and the union and require all parties to adhere to it;
2. Union representatives should be members of the WMATA Board of Directors and the safety inspection teams;

3. Retraining plans must be developed and implemented for the entire workforce and likewise, certification and recertification of safety personnel should become routine and ongoing throughout workers' careers;
4. Equipment upgrades must meet safety performance criteria and conform to a minimum safety performance standard consistent with national standards or, if set at a higher level by our jurisdiction, then those standards should be maintained;
5. Deferred maintenance must be given priority and a timetable set for completion;
6. Specific items must be addressed within a specified time frame, then tested and evaluated immediately. Adjustments and revisions must be completed within a specified period and retesting completed prior to any implementation;
7. The results of any equipment or process failure should be made public promptly and the report should be disseminated immediately to affected divisions and personnel within WMATA and the union ;
8. We support the inclusion of oversight from external entities with enforcement power;
9. We believe that non-compliance should be sanctioned and that improvements should be funded by the federal

government and the three jurisdictions providing mass transit to the Metropolitan Washington Area.

Going forward, WMATA needs to admit to its workforce that there have been problems in the past and it is committed to moving forward with greater emphasis placed on awareness, dispersal of information and a willingness to work collaboratively with the union on behalf of its employees.

Thank you for your time and attention this afternoon. I look forward to answering any questions you might have.