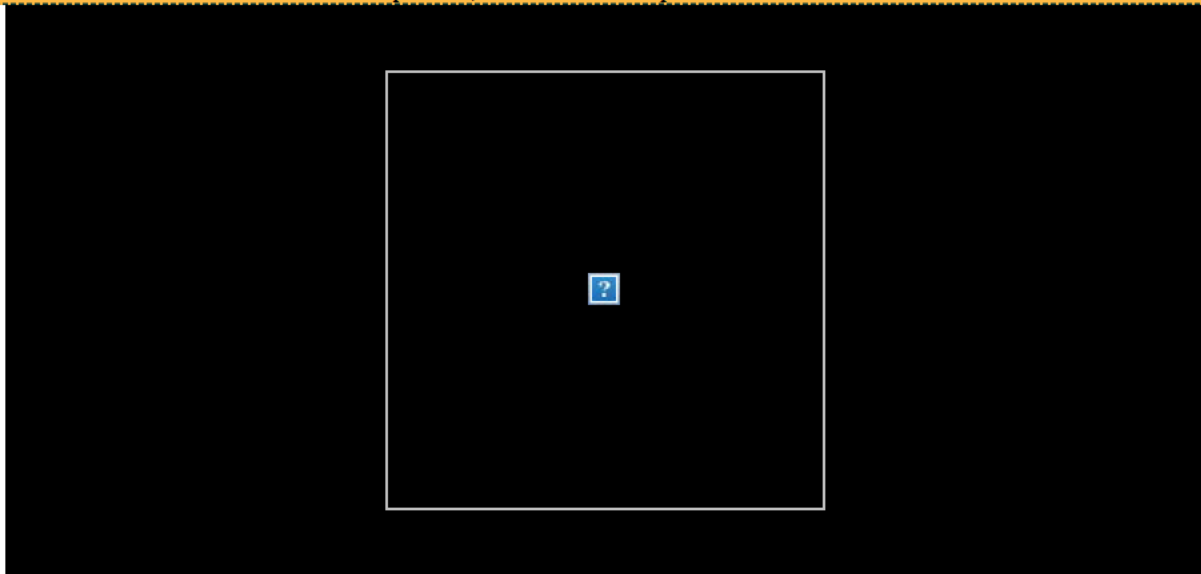


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To: [Zusman, Nancy Ellen](#); [Leerhsen, Nora](#); [Alanis, Veronica](#); [Jansen, Brad](#); [Ray, Kent](#); [Bonds, Donald](#)
Subject: Fw: FTA proposes much-delayed transit worker assault directive
Date: Tuesday, December 19, 2023 4:37:58 PM

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FTA proposes much-delayed transit worker assault directive

BY TANYA SNYDER | 12/19/2023 04:27 PM EST

FTA for the first time ever is [proposing a general directive](#) on how transit agencies must safeguard against assaults on workers, something unions have been urging for years and that Congress first required in 2015.

Reports of [major assaults on transit workers](#) nearly tripled between 2008 and 2022. Congress directed FTA in 2015 to take action to protect workers. In 2019, the Trump administration [put the rulemaking on the back burner](#), saying other safety actions adequately addressed the issue.

What the directive does: FTA is proposing to require most transit agencies under the agency's safety oversight jurisdiction to conduct safety risk assessments, identify risk mitigations or strategies and report back to FTA. As required by the bipartisan infrastructure law, transit agencies serving large urbanized areas must engage their workers, via joint labor-management safety committees, to identify ways to mitigate risk.

Three months ago, 114 members of Congress from both parties urged FTA to take action to fulfill the 2015 mandate. "These horrific attacks occur every day in the transit industry and impact drivers across the country in cities big and small," they wrote. "When transit workers are attacked while a vehicle is in motion, the lives of transit riders, pedestrians, and other drivers are put at risk as well."

Timing: Transport Workers Union International President John Samuelson called FTA's move "an unprecedented and clear directive" to address a "plague of violence" that "has been going on for far too long." Still, he called it a "national shame" that it's taken FTA eight years since the FAST Act directed the agency to establish "rail and bus safety standards, practices, or protocols" to protect operators from assault.

"Transit workers are getting attacked and abused every single day," Samuelson said. "They are getting harassed, menaced, spat upon, beaten up, even shot and killed."

Transit agencies' concerns: The American Public Transportation Association responded that transit agencies are committed to safety and that they want to work collaboratively with workers on safety issues — but warned that it must be clear that agency CEO, not workers, must have the final say.

"If there is an impasse between management and labor in a Safety Committee, it could tie up all federal public transit funding," APTA said in a statement provided to POLITICO.

What's next: The proposed directive is set to be published in Wednesday's Federal Register.

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