



PRIORITIZING SAFETY ON PUBLIC TRANSIT

WHO WE ARE: The Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) helps connect the public transit industry. Our members include transit systems, public bodies, companies that supply the sector and experts in urban mobility.

Recommendations:

1. The Government of Canada should establish an application-based transit safety and security fund that allots \$75M/year for two years. This will help support transit agencies with the specific expenditures needed to prevent, combat, and respond to safety and security incidents on their systems. Eligible costs can include staffing, training, station enhancements, public awareness and other safety and security measures identified by transit agencies.
2. The Government of Canada must strengthen penalties for assaults on transit workers by amending subsection 269.01 of the Criminal Code, expanding beyond its current definition of transit operators to include all transit workers.

With the alarming increase in incidents of violence and harassment on public transit systems across Canada, the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) recognizes the need for swift action to ensure the safety and security of transit riders and workers. In response to these concerns, CUTA established the Transit Safety Taskforce, dedicated to addressing the root causes of violence on transit and advocating for practical solutions. After thorough research and collaboration, the taskforce has finalized a comprehensive set of 27 recommendations aimed at enhancing safety measures on transit systems and engaging with all levels of government and partnering organizations to address broader societal issues that play out on public transit.

CONCERNS AND THEIR IMPACT

A recent Ipsos survey has revealed deeply concerning statistics, with 27% of Canadians expressing fears about using public transportation, particularly when traveling alone. Harassment, verbal abuse, physical threats, and unwelcome advances were identified as the primary drivers of these concerns, and the fear of crime significantly shapes public safety perceptions. These safety concerns not only jeopardize the ongoing recovery efforts of our transit systems but also have the potential to ripple into other sectors, resulting in reduced use of vital community resources.

CURRENT PROGRESS AND SEASONAL RISKS

Incidents of violence on transit have decreased since their peak during the winter months. However, with the cyclical nature of these incidents, transit agencies expect a resurgence this winter without prompt and sustained action in the coming months.

ADDRESSING BROADER SOCIETAL ISSUES

Public transit systems are a reflection of the communities they serve, and certain societal issues such as homelessness, substance use, and mental health can profoundly impact these systems. Resolving these broader concerns extends beyond the scope of transit agencies alone. Our recommendations underscore CUTA's call for all levels of government to step up with appropriate funding and support, prioritizing actions that can be led by transit systems.

TRANSIT SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

The taskforce's recommendations align with the ongoing efforts of transit agencies and are divided into five key focus areas: customer safety, staff safety, housing and supports, substance use, and mental health. The 27 recommendations developed by our taskforce require support from all levels of government. However, these measures can only be realized with federal support.



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