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| **U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer Reiterates Strong Support For Positive Train Control In Letter to APTA**  Yesterday, in correspondence shared with the President of the American Public Transportation Association, U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) expressed her concern “about any effort to substitute less effective technologies for Positive Train Control (PTC).” In her [letter](http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/13063_Boxer_letter_to_APTA_on_PTC_alternative_technologies.pdf), Senator Boxer affirmed her strong support for provisions in the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (RSIA), which she helped author, that mandated the implementation of PTC by 2015. The Senator added in her letter that “Passenger safety should be the utmost concern for all rail operators, which is why PTC must be deployed expeditiously.” Senator Boxer serves as chair of the U.S. Senate’s Environment and Public Works Committee, a committee that will play a profound role in drafting our nation’s next surface transportation bill.  Earlier this year, APTA held its annual Legislative Conference in Washington, DC. At this Legislative Conference members of the Commuter Rail CEO’s subcommittee considered and approved a proposal to permit the use of alternative technologies to achieve the safety goals sought by the RSIA through the implementation of a PTC system (with a stated deadline of 2015). We are concerned that APTA’s position may serve to diminish the strong safety provisions included in the RSIA that was signed into law by President George W. Bush shortly after the tragic Chatsworth train collision on September 12, 2008.  PTC is a GPS-based safety technology capable of preventing train-to-train collisions, over-speed derailments and also capable of bringing trains to a safe stop in the event of a natural disaster. PTC holds the promise of dramatically improving rail safety and for this reason has, for many years, been listed on the National Transportation Safety Board’s (NTSB) “Most Wanted” list.  Most recently, APTA held its annual Rail Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. At that conference, I reiterated our Board-adopted policy of supporting PTC and also shared our opposition to any effort to permit the use of alternative PTC technologies that do not achieve the same safety goals and are not interoperable. APTA has instructed a number of their subcommittees, including the Commuter and Intercity Rail and Legislative Subcommittees, to review their position on PTC. At the APTA Rail Conference in Philadelphia, Metrolink and the Orange County Transportation Authority supported our position that alternative PTC technologies must achieve the same safety goals and be interoperable. We will continue to aggressively advance, both at APTA and on Capitol Hill, our Board-adopted position on PTC.  <http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/13063_Boxer_letter_to_APTA_on_PTC_alternative_technologies.pdf> |
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