

Legislation Text

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Urging the Pennsylvania State Legislature to pass Senate Bill 236 which would amend Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in assault, by adding Public Transportation Employees to the list of protected individuals.

WHEREAS, The Southeastern Pennsylvania Public Transportation Association (SEPTA) is the prevalent mode of transportation for many Philadelphia County residents. During 2011, ridership increases were recorded across the region and on all of SEPTA's modes of travel. Trips on City Transit Division buses, trolleys and subway/subway-elevated rail increased four percent. Regional Rail trips were up by nearly a half-million, and the year-end total of 35.4 million is just shy of the ridership record set in 2008. Suburban Transit Division bus, light- and high-speed rail modes also jumped 5 percent; and

WHEREAS, As SEPTA ridership has increased so have assaults on SEPTA employees. During 2011 there were forty-six (46) assaults on SEPTA bus operators an increase from twenty (20) assaults in 2010 - including drivers being cut with razors, punched in the mouth, slapped, spat upon and sexually assaulted; and

WHEREAS, The safety of SEPTA bus, train and subway operators is of the utmost importance to SEPTA passengers and everyone in the area covered by this public transportation system; and

WHEREAS, During the current session of the state legislature, State Senator Christine Tartaglione introduced Senate Bill 236 which would add 'transit employees' to a class of protected workers such as firefighters and police officers and would upgrade assaults against these workers to aggravated assaults, which carries a higher penalty upon conviction. Senator Tartaglione's bill was referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee on January 24, 2011. There has been no further action on Senate Bill 236; now therefore

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That it hereby urges the Pennsylvania State Legislature to pass Senate Bill 236 which would amend Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in assault, by adding Public Transportation Employees to the list of protected individuals.

FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the leadership of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, and the Philadelphia delegation.