

From: Torossian, Connor (FTA) <connor.torossian@dot.gov>
Sent: Monday, December 08, 2025 5:47 PM EST
To: Cristina Pacione-Zayas <Cristina.Pacione-Zayas@cityofchicago.org>
CC: Dominique Warren <Dominique.Warren@cityofchicago.org>
Subject: Letter from FTA Administrator Molinaro
Attachment(s): "The Honorable Brandon Johnson - FTA Special Directive Letter to Chicago - 2025.12.08.pdf"

[Warning: External email]

Good Evening,

Please confirm receipt of the attached letter.

Best,
Connor A. Torossian
Associate Administrator for Communications and Congressional Affairs
Federal Transit Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Transit
Administration**

Administrator

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

December 8, 2025

The Honorable Brandon Johnson
Mayor of Chicago
Chicago City Hall
121 N. LaSalle St., 4th Fl.
Chicago, I.L. 60602

Dear Mayor Johnson:

To ensure a safe transit system for the people of Chicago, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is issuing a Special Directive requiring the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) to implement immediate, measurable corrective actions to reduce assaults on transit workers and passengers and to address unsafe conditions contributing to elevated violent crime rates.

Creating a safe, reliable transit system is the responsibility of leaders at every level. CTA, the City of Chicago, and the State of Illinois have failed to meet this obligation. If CTA does not promptly increase its law enforcement presence, FTA will act, including by withholding federal funds.

The horrific attack on Bethany MaGee aboard a CTA train has shaken not only Chicago but also every community that depends on public transportation. As FTA Administrator, I call on you as an elected leader and on Chicago transit officials to take decisive action on safety issues that lead to such tragedies.

Given high crime rates on CTA property, this incident is not isolated and reflects systemic failures in both leadership and accountability on all levels that cannot be tolerated. I will not accept the brutal assault of an innocent 26-year-old woman as an inevitable cost of providing public transportation.

It is unconscionable that Ms. MaGee was set on fire by a suspect—reported to have 72 prior arrests—who had been released after being charged in August for assaulting a social worker.

The attack on Ms. MaGee was preventable. Transit leaders and elected officials who fail to enforce basic laws and permit disorder to erode the integrity of their systems are making deliberate choices that endanger riders.

Reporting to FTA shows CTA’s violent crime rate is nearly four times the national average, with four homicides in the past 18 months. Assaults against riders on CTA property have surged 150 percent in the last five years.

Safety is not a talking point—it is the most fundamental obligation of public service. I expect CTA to swiftly comply with the Special Directive to protect the lives of the people who ride and operate its transit system.

The Special Directive identifies two findings related to CTA’s failure to:

- Update its Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan; and
- Maintain a safe operating environment for workers and passengers, including failing to implement adequate mitigations to address a years-long pattern of elevated assaults on workers and riders and serious violent crime.

The directive includes actions that CTA must immediately complete, including:

- Updating its Agency Safety Plan by the end of December and sending the plan to FTA within seven days of approval by CTA’s Transit Board Committee;
- Developing a verifiable security enhancement plan and submitting it to FTA for approval by December 15, 2025; and
- Implementing the security enhancement plan in full, as approved by FTA, by December 19, 2025.

The well-being of our citizens relies on leadership that accepts responsibility and acts accordingly. I urge you to address this moment with the seriousness it warrants. A similar letter has been sent to The Honorable Jay Robert “JB” Pritzker, Governor of Illinois.

Respectfully,

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Marcus J. Molinaro