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## **CARDIN, MIKULSKI, WEBB DENOUNCE CONTINUED BLOCKAGE OF DEDICATED METRO FUNDING**

Washington, DC – U.S. **Senators Benjamin L. Cardin** and **Barbara A. Mikulski (Both D-MD)** today joined with **Senator Jim Webb (D-VA)** in expressing their frustrations that the Senate was blocked from considering dedicated funding of \$1.5 billion over 10 years for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit System, which already passed the House of Representatives. The bill was included as part of a bipartisan, omnibus package of legislation, *The Advancing America's Priorities Act*, which contains more than 30 non-controversial provisions.

"I find it unfortunate that one senator continues to prevent the Senate from moving forward in its consideration of so many bills that are widely supported by members of the Senate and so important to our communities," said **Senator Cardin**. "A bipartisan group of Senators and a majority of the House of Representatives agree that direct funding for Metro is a critical investment in the infrastructure and day-to-day operations of the federal government. Every day we allow one senator to block us from voting on this measure, and fulfilling our responsibility to the National Capital Region, the deeper the need and the higher the cost."

"America's Metro needs our help, not a string of parliamentary tricks. Funding for WMATA means more than just transportation - it means residents and visitors to our nation's capital can live, work, worship and play throughout the metro area without ever getting in their cars. As commuters face soaring gas prices, they need to know the government is on their side with the funding Metro needs to keep them on the go," said **Senator Mikulski**. "It's time for a vote on this and the other critical bills that have been unnecessarily stalled."

"The future of Metro and its continued success rely upon consistent support from the federal government and the regional localities it serves," said **Senator Webb**. "Well-considered programs addressing mental health, life-ending diseases, child exploitation, and dedicated Metro funding cannot be left to languish because one Senator continues to block their consideration. These issues are too important to let political gamesmanship triumph. I would hope we could work in a principled, bipartisan manner to get these bills passed."

The economic health of the region – Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia – and the Federal Government are interconnected with the growth of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit System (Metro). Nearly half of Metrorail's rush hour passengers are federal employees. And approximately 10 percent of all Metro's riders use the Metrorail stations at the Pentagon, Capitol South or Union Station, three hubs for the military and civilian federal employees, including Congress. The General Services Administration has even made it policy to locate federal facilities in close proximity to Metro stations. Metrobus service is available at virtually every federal facility. Every weekday 34,000 bus trips either arrive or depart from the Pentagon.

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