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MIKULSKI, CARDIN ANNOUNCE FUNDING FOR MARYLAND HOMELAND SECURITY PRIORITIES

WASHINGTON, DC – U.S. Senators **Barbara A. Mikulski** and **Benjamin L. Cardin (both D-MD)** today announced significant federal investments in Maryland’s transit and port security following the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announcement of awards for state infrastructure grants. Maryland has received more than \$6.4 million for port security in Baltimore. An additional \$38 million has been awarded to the National Capital Region, which includes Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties, for transit security. Senator Mikulski is a member of the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee. **Senator Cardin is Chairman of the Judiciary, Terrorism and Homeland Security Subcommittee and a member of the Budget Committee.**

“Protecting America’s security begins at home and these grants strengthen our ability to protect our neighborhoods, our economic livelihood and our nation’s borders,” said Senator Cardin. **“I am proud of the role Maryland, and the entire National Capital Region, has as a national and international hub for government, business, and tourism. But that spotlight inherently brings an increased risk that makes federal investments like these much more critical.”**

“We are a high-risk and high-threat nation, and today’s threats were unthinkable years ago. Our Homeland Security grant programs play an integral role in keeping us safe. Today’s announcement acknowledges what we have always known – Maryland is a critical partner in protecting the country from potential attacks,” Senator Mikulski said. “Our economy depends on moving goods and people via our ports and mass transit systems, and our security demands that they are safe and protected from attacks. I will continue to fight to safeguard these much-needed federal investments in hometown security.”

PORT SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM (PSGP)

The PSGP provides funding to finance security enhancements at critical national seaports, including plans, exercises and equipment to prevent, protect, respond to and recover from potential attacks to our nation’s ports. Approximately 11 million containers come into the United States each year, including 19,000 containers daily. The Port of Baltimore, which is the 13th largest port for foreign cargo, has received more than \$6.4 million. The Port of Baltimore is a major economic engine for Maryland and America, supporting more than 50,000 jobs in Maryland, including more than 16,000 direct jobs. The funding was awarded to the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA).

“The Port of Baltimore is one of the most important economic hubs for our state and region. Its close proximity to Washington, access to the Northeast corridor, and sheer volume make it a target of the highest level,” said Senator Cardin. “I am pleased that DHS has recognized this and will be providing additional resources to improve security.”

“Ports are high-threat targets for terrorism. We need to make sure the Port of Baltimore and all ports across America are safe, secure and growing,” **Senator Mikulski** said. “I will continue to fight to keep our ports and our people safe.”

TRANSIT SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM (TSGP)

The TSGP provides funding to urban areas to strengthen critical infrastructure against risk of potential attack. Funds support operators of intercity bus and rail systems for training, planning, operations and equipment. The National Capital Region has received more than \$38 million, including \$24.29 million for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and \$13.15 million for the Maryland Transit Authority (MTA), for transit security. The remaining \$635,719 will go to transit security for the Virginia Railway Express.

“Our mass transit systems are highly visible targets that we rely on daily to efficiently move commuters and tourists, taking thousands of cars off our roads. Transit systems like Metro and MARC also can move thousands during emergency situations like evacuations. I believe it is imperative that we keep these critical systems functioning and safe, providing the federal resources to allow local and regional governments to deal with any potential threat,” said Senator Cardin.

“Transit systems are uniquely challenged to protect and perform in a heightened state of risk. At a time when we are encouraging the use of rail and transit alternatives like MARC and Metro, we need to make sure we are keeping commuters safe,” said Senator Mikulski. “I will continue to work with my colleagues on proposals that support these critical transit systems.”

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