

tin cans. This act of kindness in the midst of cruelty and chaos clearly demonstrated the character of this exemplary young man.

PFC Nicholas Madaras was a patriot in the best sense of the word. He and others like him have given their lives in defense of our Nation's principles, and for that, all of us in Connecticut and across America owe them a deep debt of gratitude.

I salute Private Madaras for his tremendous service to our country, and wish to offer my deepest sympathies to his parents, William and Shalini, his sister Marie, his brother Christopher, and to everyone who knew and loved him.

NATIONAL CAPITAL TRANSPORTATION AMENDMENTS ACT

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. President, this legislation, the National Capital Transportation Amendments Act of 2006, authorizes a total of \$1,500,000,000 in matching Federal funds over the next 10 years to help sustain the Federal Government's longstanding commitment to the Washington Metropolitan area's Metrorail system.

In March, 2006, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority celebrated the 30th anniversary of passenger service on the Metrorail system. Since service first began in 1976, Metrorail has grown from a 4.6-mile, five-station, 22,000-passenger system into the Nation's second busiest rapid transit operation. Today the Metrorail system consists of 106.3 miles, 86 stations and carries more than 100 million passengers a year. The Metrorail system provides a unified and coordinated transportation system for the region, enhances mobility for the millions of residents, visitors, and the Federal workforce in the region, promotes orderly growth and development of the region, enhances our environment, and preserves the beauty and dignity of our Nation's Capital. It is also an example of an unparalleled partnership that spans every level of government from city to State to Federal.

As the largest employer in this region, the Federal Government has had a longstanding and unique responsibility to support the Metro system. This special responsibility was recognized more than 40 years ago in the National Capital Transportation Act of 1960, when Congress found that "an improved transportation system for the National Capital region is essential for the continued and effective performance of the functions of the Government of the United States." Today more than a third of Federal employees in this region rely on Metrorail to get to work, and at rush hour, more than 40 percent of Metro's riders are Federal employees. The service that WMATA provides is also a critical component of Federal emergency evacuation plans

for the region. The Federal Government's interest in Metro is "unique and enduring."

It took extraordinary perseverance and effort to build the 106-mile Metrorail system. From its origins in legislation first approved by the Congress during the Eisenhower administration, three major statutes—the National Capital Transportation Act of 1969, the National Capital Transportation amendments of 1979, and the National Capital Transportation amendments of 1990—were enacted to provide Federal and matching local funds for construction of the system. In addition, in ISTEA, TEA-21 and most recently in SAFETEA-LU, we made the Metrorail eligible for millions of dollars in Federal funds annually to maintain and modernize the system, and provided an additional \$104 million for WMATA's procurement of 52 rail cars and construction of upgrades to traction power equipment on 20 stations to allow the transit agency to expand many of its trains from six to eight-cars.

But the system is aging and has been experiencing increasing incidents of equipment breakdowns, delays in scheduled service, and unprecedented crowding on trains. In 2004, WMATA released a "Metro Matters" report which found a \$1.5 billion shortfall in funding over 6 years to meet WMATA's capital and operating needs. A blue-ribbon panel, sponsored by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Greater Washington Board of Trade and the Federal City Council, published a report a year later which concluded that WMATA faces an average annual operating and capital shortfall of approximately \$300 million between fiscal year 2006 and fiscal year 2015.

This legislation seeks to provide additional Federal funds to help close this gap. To be eligible for any Federal funds that may be appropriated annually under this legislation, the District of Columbia, the State of Maryland, and the Commonwealth of Virginia must first enact the required Compact amendments and either establish or use an existing dedicated funding source, such as Maryland's transportation trust fund, to provide the local matching funds. The legislation is still subject to the annual appropriations process, and it is my hope that Federal funding authorized under this act will be forthcoming in future years. I urge adoption of the legislation.

PREVENTING CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN IRAQ

Mr. LEAHY. The heart wrenching reports of civilian casualties in Iraq, each one of whom represents a mother, father, son or daughter who has been injured or killed in the crossfire or as a result of deliberate attacks, should deeply concern us. Thousands of innocent Iraqi men, women and children

have died as a result of suicide bombs, shootings, improvised explosive devices, or from tragic mistakes at U.S. military checkpoints.

There is not enough time today to discuss this issue in depth. There are too many incidents, and too many issues, from the widespread and inappropriate use of cluster munitions in populated areas which indiscriminately and disproportionately injure and kill civilians, to the despicable acts of terrorism that are designed to cause the maximum amount of suffering among innocent people.

I do want to mention that both the Department of Defense and the U.S. Agency for International Development have programs in both Iraq and Afghanistan to provide condolence payments or assistance to civilians who have been injured or the families of those killed as a result of U.S. military operations. The USAID program is named after Marla Ruzicka who died in a car bombing in Baghdad on April 16, 2005, at the age of 28. Marla devoted the last years of her life getting assistance to innocent victims of the military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the organization she founded, Campaign for Innocent Victims in Conflict, continues to work on these issues in both countries.

The Pentagon's condolence program, which is administered by Judge Advocate General officers in the field, provides limited amounts of compensation depending on the nature of the loss. The program has suffered from some administrative weaknesses which I will speak about at greater length at another time. However, it does represent an acknowledgement by U.S. military commanders that it is neither right, nor is it in our interest, to turn our backs on innocent people who have been harmed as a result of our mistakes.

I also want to mention a June 6, 2006, Wall Street Journal article entitled "U.S. Curbs Iraqi Civilian Deaths In Checkpoint, Convoy Incidents," and I ask unanimous consent that it be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.
(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. LEAHY. This article describes laudable efforts by the Department of Defense to reduce civilian casualties that have so often resulted from mistakes that could have been avoided with relatively simple precautions at checkpoints.

For years, I and others urged the Pentagon to ensure that U.S. checkpoints were clearly marked and that soldiers at checkpoints in Iraq are trained to warn drivers in ways that avoid confusion, not simply with lights or by firing their guns into the air which a driver might not see or that could cause a driver to panic. For