

WASHINGTON, DC – Last night, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) offered the following statement in support of an amendment to restore \$150 million in dedicated Federal funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, which was cut by House Republicans in their spending bill for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2011:

“I rise today to support the intent of the Connolly Amendment which seeks to restore \$150 million in dedicated Federal funding to 'America's Subway' – the Washington Metro – which is otherwise eliminated under the Republican Continuing Resolution.

“The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) operates the country's second largest rail system. Every day, that system carries more than a million people – from the federal employees who keep our government running to the families from across the country who come to visit their nation's capital. Clearly, the system warrants a strong commitment from the federal government.

“In 2009, we passed, and the President signed, legislation that provides \$1.5 billion in federal dedicated funding to WMATA over the next ten years to help meet the capital and infrastructure needs of the 30-year old system. The first installment of this funding – which is being matched by the District of Columbia, Virginia, and Maryland – was appropriated in Fiscal 2010.

“This investment is, first and foremost, being used to move forward with the implementation of the recommendations of the National Transportation Safety Board following the horrific Red Line crash which tragically killed 9 people and injured many more. This includes the purchase of the new series 7000 rail cars to replace the oldest cars in the fleet. This funding will also enable Metro to rebuild its core infrastructure, replacing miles of track, switches and fasteners, maintenance work that will help to build a safer, more reliable system.

“Eliminating this funding will cause the Federal government to renege on its statutory commitment to the Metro system, endangers the local match, hampers the ability of Metro to make much needed safety and capital improvements, and puts at risk countless tourists and commuters who ride Metro every day. I urge my colleagues to restore this critical investment in the Washington Metro System.”