



**Date:** October 11, 2005  
**To:** Mayor and Members of the City Council  
**From:** Councilmember Bonnie Lowenthal, First District *BL*  
**Subject:** **Reducing Violent Activity on Public Transit Systems**

---

As a member of the City Council and a board member on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), I have become increasingly concerned about reports of violent activity both in and around public transit systems. Just recently, there was a significant incident here in Long Beach and there have been many more throughout Los Angeles County. Safe public transit systems are vital to our community and we must work to ensure that they remain safe for all who rely on them for their transportation needs.

There is currently no law that specifically applies to carrying weapons or engaging in violent crime on mass transit systems, and no law that provides for specific penalties or penalty enhancements for these crimes.

For the next State legislative session, I propose that the City work with Long Beach Transit, Los Angeles County, the MTA, the League of California Cities, other major metropolitan transit agencies and other applicable organizations to introduce legislation that would make it a specific crime to carry a weapon or engage in violent activity in or around a mass transit system and enact stronger penalties for violation of that law. This legislation could be modeled after the Gun Free School Zone Act of 1995, which states that any person who possesses a firearm in a K-12 school zone shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for two, three, or five years.

By increasing the penalties for these violent acts, we can enact a positive change in the crime rate for violent offenses on public transit systems and ensure that our community can feel safe utilizing public transportation.

**Recommendation: Refer item to the State Legislation and Environmental Affairs Committee for inclusion in the 2006 State Legislative Agenda**