

## Crime on MUNI

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By [Rina Palta](#) on August 2, 2010



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You may remember the string of assaults along the T-Third MUNI Rail line this past spring, which inspired the San Francisco Police Department to beef up patrols around stations in the Bayview. The crimes also prompted some soul-searching about Black-on-Asian racism in the city.

The three attacks were all on Asian-Americans--two of them elderly--waiting for or getting off the T, and all allegedly perpetrated by groups of African-American teens. In one incident, a group of boys allegedly beat a 57-year-old woman before pushing her onto the tracks. In another, an 83-year-old man died in the hospital after being assaulted earlier in the day.

Now the attacks have inspired legislation: tomorrow, the SF Board of Supervisors will take up an ordinance that would implement higher penalties for certain crimes that happen on or around MUNI.

Supervisor Carmen Chu, who wrote the legislation, told me that following the attacks members of the community began approaching the Board of Supervisors to do something to quell the violence and help people feel safe on MUNI, a place they realistically can't avoid. So with the help of the City Attorney, she began investigating which laws the city could beef up to deter crime in the system. Since most penal matters are the domain of the state government (including assault, battery, homicide, robbery, etc.), Chu said she had to limit the law to crimes over which the city has jurisdiction.

If passed, the legislation would increase the penalties for two crimes: aggressive pursuit and loitering while carrying a concealed weapon would all carry maximum penalties of \$1,000 if the crime occurred on MUNI vehicles, platforms, or bus zones, as opposed to \$500 for the same crime committed somewhere else. The ordinance also has an interesting side note: though the Board of Supervisors can't legally tell judges how to punish people beyond setting parameters, they added a recommendation that juveniles convicted of any of these crimes be given community service or in-home sentences instead of probation or time in juvenile hall.

The Board of Supervisors meets tomorrow at 2pm in City Hall.

[http://kalwnews.org/blogs/rinapalta/2010/08/02/crime-muni\\_504410.html](http://kalwnews.org/blogs/rinapalta/2010/08/02/crime-muni_504410.html)