



**Regional  
Transportation  
Authority**

175 W. Jackson Blvd.  
Suite 1550  
Chicago, IL 60604  
(312) 913-3200  
www.rtachicago.com

April 10, 2009

Dear CREATE Program Partners:

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Jim Reilly  
Chairman

James Buchanan  
Jan Carlson  
William R. Coulson  
Rev. L. Tyrone Crider, Sr.  
Patrick J. Durante  
Phil Fuentes  
Al Jourdan  
Dwight A. Magalis  
Patrick V. Riley, Jr.  
Michael Rosenberg  
J.D. Ross  
Michael Scott  
Bishop Horace E. Smith, M.D.  
Judy Bäär Topinka  
Douglas M. Troiani

Stephen E. Schlickman  
Executive Director

I am writing on behalf of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) to express my enthusiastic support for the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program. The program will provide a substantial benefit to northeastern Illinois' transit system by allowing it to operate in a more efficient fashion, while potentially increasing the system's capacity.

The Chicago region has served as the nation's railroad hub since the mid-1800s, with six of the seven largest railroads in North America owning tracks that cross through the region. These companies carry approximately 2 billion tons of the country's freight each year. All of this rail traffic has created rail congestion in the Chicago region, evidenced by the fact that it can take just as long for a freight train to travel from the California to Chicago (two days), as it takes for the same train to pass through the city. As a result, companies that can't efficiently ship their goods by freight train are turning to trucks which in turn eat up more fuel and contributes to increased congestion on our region's highways.

By improving the region's rail infrastructure and local road network, including grade separation projects to eliminate train interference and the associated delay between passenger and freight train traffic, the CREATE Program can increase the efficiency of our region's transit system by increasing its capacity and improving its on-time performance. This improved commuter rail service will encourage more commuters to shift from their cars to transit, thus improving congestion and our environment. The CREATE Program can also improve congestion on the region's roads and highways and thus increasing the performance of the region's bus system.

The RTA strongly supports the CREATE Program and recognizes its many benefits to our region's public transportation system.

Sincerely,

Stephen E. Schlickman



**Metra**



**pace**