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*Bringing Together
 State Leaders from
 Across the Region
 to Advocate
 for Passenger Rail
 Improvements*

The Midwest Interstate
 Passenger Rail Commission is
 a 10-state interstate compact
 commission that promotes,
 coordinates and supports
 regional improvements to
 passenger rail service. Our
 member states include Illinois,
 Indiana, Iowa, Michigan,
 Minnesota, Missouri,
 Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio
 and Wisconsin

April 9, 2009

Joseph P. Clary
 Director,
 Division of Public and Intermodal Transportation
 Illinois Department of Transportation
 300 West Adams St.
 Chicago, Illinois 60606

Dear Mr. Clary,

The Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission (MIPRC) is an interstate compact commission of Midwestern governors, state legislators and their designees working to preserve and expand passenger rail throughout the Midwest. MIPRC and its member states advocate for and advance passenger rail service plans and projects that bring tangible benefits to communities across the region.

With passenger rail growth largely dependent on utilization of existing freight rail lines, it is critical that we ensure the development of a freight rail infrastructure system that can accommodate the needs of the freight rail lines and their global customers, as well as the needs of intercity passenger rail customers.

We are pleased that the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is taking a major step towards modernizing its freight and passenger rail infrastructure through CREATE. CREATE is a program founded by a public-private partnership of federal, state, and local government agencies – along with the railroads – to build new track; make connection and control system improvements; and construct thirty-one rail grade separations. Twelve of the seventy-eight CREATE projects will directly benefit Amtrak intercity rail, and fifteen projects will benefit Metra commuter rail, by eliminating passenger train reliability and speed concerns. CREATE is a program of both regional and national significance.

\$330 million in federal, state, local and freight rail funds have been committed to CREATE, and several major projects have been completed. However, without additional funding, many CREATE projects identified over five years ago are unlikely to be completed. Currently, it can take freight railcars longer to move in and through Chicago than it takes them to get from Long Beach, California to the Chicago area. If northeastern Illinois cannot eliminate its freight rail congestion, our ability to improve existing passenger rail options for those traveling to, within, and through the Midwestern states will certainly be negatively impacted.

MIPRC is a strong advocate for CREATE and other infrastructure improvements throughout the region that will modernize our aging freight rail infrastructure and lessen train delays. We support CREATE and its efforts to decrease the time and cost of moving people and goods across America.

Sincerely,

Laura Kliewer
 Director, Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission