



RICHARD M. DALEY, CHAIRMAN
RITA R. ATHAS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

March 16, 2009

TO: CREATE Partners

Chicago is at the center of one of the largest trading areas in the world. We are the intermodal capital of North America, handling 14 million twenty-foot container units yearly, more containers than L.A./Long Beach (13.1 million) and 4 times as much as NY/NJ. One-third of our nation's rail and truck cargo moves to, from or through the Chicago region, making it critical to the international market.

The quality of transportation infrastructure has long been a major contributor to our economic growth. Delays and congestion in rail freight threaten the economic vitality of the region. The Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Program (CREATE), a public-private partnership between the nation's railroads and state and local government, will make an unprecedented investment in critically needed rail infrastructure improvements that will increase the efficiency of freight and passenger rail service.

World Business Chicago, the city's economic development organization, whose mission is to attract and retain both U.S. and international business, supports the CREATE program. CREATE will boost the competitiveness of manufacturers and encourage long-term job growth in Illinois and nationwide. During its construction period CREATE will generate an average of more than 2,700 full-time construction jobs and \$365 million in purchases of materials and services. The total economic benefits of the CREATE program will be 17,000 jobs sustained and \$2 billion in annual economic production within two decades.

As the hub of the nation's freight network, the Chicago region is increasingly interrelated, not just with Illinois, but also with the rest of the U.S. and the international marketplace. The significant investment in rail infrastructure improvements through the CREATE project will bring substantial national, regional and local economic benefits, which are critical to the competitiveness and efficiency of businesses throughout the nation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rita Athas".

Rita Athas
Executive Director

www.worldbusinesschicago.com