

economic opportunity



Illinois Railroads: Delivering Economic Opportunity and a Brighter Future

Illinois has been the nation's rail hub for more than 150 years. Long before construction of the interstate highway system and growth of airlines, the state's rail network helped make the U.S. economy the strongest in the world.

But the state's continued rail dominance and key role in international trade is threatened by increasing rail congestion through Chicago. If we don't act now to address it and provide capacity to serve the increasing demand for rail services, shippers will route their goods through other states. Indiana, Missouri, Tennessee, and Louisiana are all poised to take rail business growth away from Illinois if we are unable to accommodate it through the projects in the CREATE Program.

Throughout their history, railroads have funded their own infrastructure needs, helping create economic growth at the same time. Apart from CREATE funding, the railroads spent over \$3 billion in the Chicago region between 1998 and 2009 on capital maintenance and capital improvement projects. Strategic public support for rail improvements offers a strong return for the investment – stimulating economic growth, protecting public safety and improving our quality of life.

A Proud Tradition: Illinois railroads lead the nation.

- Illinois ranks first in volume of freight carried in 2010 – 487.8 million tons
- There are more than 7,306 miles of railroads in Illinois
- 1,300 freight, passenger, and commuter trains pass through the Chicago region every day

Economic Benefits: Railroads drive investment and jobs in Illinois.

- 38,000+ rail-related jobs, representing \$1.7 billion in annual wages
- 18,192 rail workers statewide
- The Illinois rail workforce is diverse: 45% women and minority
- Railroads hire more U.S. veterans than other industries
- Average rail worker salary = \$98,500 plus benefits
- \$22 billion in annual economic value to Illinois businesses
- Railroads link Illinois businesses to global markets
- Demand for rail services in Illinois rail expected to double by 2025, bringing 17,000 new jobs and \$2 billion in annual economic production

Environmental Benefits: Railroads are cleaner and more efficient.

- Railroads boosted fuel efficiency 74 percent since 1980.
- Highway lane miles have increased by just 5 percent in the last 20 years while traffic is projected to increase 30 percent within 10 years.
- 1 gallon of fuel moves 1 ton of freight 480 miles by rail versus 100 miles by truck.
- 1 mile of highway (single lane) costs 5 to 10 as much as 1 mile of railroad.
- Railroads produce less pollution than trucks and aircraft.