



August 24, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing on behalf of the Chicago Area Laborers-Employers Cooperation and Education Trust (“LECET”) to confirm LECET’s full support of the Illinois Department of Transportation’s application for the Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Opportunity (MPDG) funding on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program. This grant will fund a segment of the Belt Junction and 80th Street Junction Replacements (defined as “EW2”), which includes reconfiguring the Belt Railway Company (BRC) main tracks between the Dan Ryan Expressway and Belt Junction, where four freight railroads conflict with each other and Metra’s Southwest Service operations.

Chicago Area LECET is a labor-management organization comprised of the 15 local unions affiliated with the Laborers International Union of North America who make up the Laborers’ District Council of Chicago and Vicinity and its approximate 1,200 signatory contractors. LECET represents reputable, responsible, experienced contractors and over 14,000 union Laborers in the nine-county area of Northeastern Illinois. Our signatory contractors proudly fund and participate in the Chicago Laborers’ District Council Apprenticeship Program, which requires a minimum of 2,400 hours of on-the-job work training and 360 hours of classroom training over the course of two years before one may become a journey worker.

Project EW2 aligns with CREATE Program’s overall goals to improve rail operations in the Chicago metropolitan area and the transit-riding experience, streamline the national supply chain, and reduce the environmental impacts of rail operations on the public. Beyond these benefits, these improvements will have a major impact on creating construction jobs for the women and men that the Laborers’ District Council proudly represents, many of whom who have performed infrastructure improvement work for decades. It cannot be stressed enough that projects like EW2 help provide our members with steady incomes and well-deserved benefits, which will ultimately be pumped back into local and regional economies.

For all of these reasons, Chicago Area LECET fully supports this application and looks forward to the project’s successful implementation.

Sincerely,

Patrick S. Hosty
Executive Director



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Executive Director

James P. Connolly
LECET Chairman
Laborers’ District Council

James Cassidy
LECET Vice-Chairman
Midwest Wall & Ceiling Contractors

www.ChicagoLecet.org

Anthony Cantone
Laborers’ Local 225

Mark Castelvechhi
Laborers’ Local 582

Joseph V. Healy
Laborers’ District Council

Rich Kuczkowski
Laborers’ Local 2

Frank Taffora
Laborers’ Local 5

Daniel Charles
Chicago Demolition
Contractors Association

Bob Duermit
Illinois Environmental
Contractors Association

Joseph Koppers
MARBA

Gary Lundsberg
Concrete Contractors
Association of Greater Chicago

Lexi Southall
Contractors’ Association of
Will & Grundy Counties