



## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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**JB PRITZKER**  
GOVERNOR

December 10, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Federal-State Partnership (FSP): P2

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am pleased to offer this letter of support for Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) application for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Grant Program funding on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program. This grant will fund the Rock Island connection project, known as P2. The project focuses on constructing a flyover bridge between Belt Junction and Metra Commuter Rail's Rock Island District (RID) line. Implementing P2 will enable Metra to shift its SouthWest Service (SWS) trains to the RID line, ultimately reducing congestion and conflicts between freight and passenger service in and out of Belt Junction, where 30 Metra and 90 freight trains cross paths each day. By implementing P2, commuter trains will now terminate at LaSalle Street Station, versus Chicago Union Station (CUS), serving to shorten the average travel time for commuters, and enabling an expansion of Amtrak's intercity passenger rail service in the Midwest, by opening capacity at CUS.

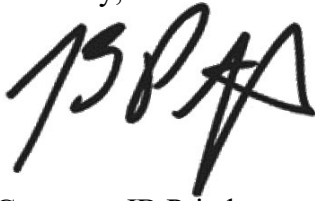
This project is a critical component of the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (CIP) – a grouping of four major improvements that make up the most complex portion of the CREATE Program. These four improvements are being advanced as a single project due to their logistical and environmental linkages. The first two components of the CIP (projects P3 and GS19) began construction in October 2022 with the support of a 2018 INFRA grant and are on schedule for completion in 2026. In 2024, the next phase of the 75th St CIP (Project EW2A) was awarded MPDG funding for construction, which will commence in 2026. The remaining two project components of the 75th Street CIP, P2 and other segments of EW2, are critical to ensure the full benefits of the overall project.

As Governor, I am committed to enhancing safety and improving the efficiency of rail operations throughout the Chicago region, benefiting both freight customers and rail passengers. Modernizing Illinois' rail network is essential for facilitating the efficient transportation of goods nationwide and enhancing community mobility. Project P2 advances the CREATE Program's goals by improving rail operations in the Chicago metropolitan area while benefiting

neighborhoods near rail corridors. Beyond these local and regional benefits, the project will deliver significant positive impacts on the national supply chain.

The efficiencies resulting from this project support the movement of people and consumer goods throughout the nation. The 75th St CIP project includes investments in K-12 education and workforce opportunities as well as community mobility improvements (CMI). These CMIs enhance the safety, accessibility, quality of life, and visual appeal of the community while enhancing local transportation systems for people walking, bicycling, taking transit, and driving. These investments also support cleaner air, reduced railroad delays, and improved development opportunities, ensuring the project's benefits extend well beyond the rail industry. I fully support IDOT's application and look forward to the project's successful implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JB Pritzker", written in a cursive, stylized font.

Governor JB Pritzker