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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
an eight-state interstate
compact commission that
promotes, coordinates and
supports regional
improvements to passenger
rail service. Our member
states include
Illinois, Indiana, Kansas,
Michigan, Minnesota,
Missouri, North Dakota and
Wisconsin.



December 11, 2024

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

The Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission (MIPRC) is fully supportive of the Illinois Department of Transportation's 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 CREATE Program's [P2 Connection](#) is a component of the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project. This project will eliminate the most congested rail chokepoint in the Chicago Terminal, Belt Junction, where 30 Metra and 90 freight trains per day cross each other's paths. The rail-rail flyover at 75th Street will eliminate conflict between 30 SouthWest Service (SWS) Metra trains and 35 freight trains operating on the Western Avenue Corridor (CSX). This project will allow SWS trains access to LaSalle Street Station instead of Union Station, which increases capacity for the SWS while also freeing capacity at Union Station for increased Amtrak service and proposed high-speed rail.

The first two components of the 75th St. 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. MIPRC was supportive of previous grant applications for the 75th St. CIP and is so for this application, as P2 and EW2A are critical to ensure the full benefits of the overall project.

Project P2 helps achieve the CREATE Program's overall goals to improve rail operations in the Chicago metropolitan area and improve quality of life in neighborhoods near rail. The efficiencies resulting from this project support the movement of people and consumer goods throughout the nation. Not only does P2 support broader economic growth, but neighboring communities also benefit from cleaner air, reduced railroad delays, and improved development opportunities.

MIPRC fully supports this application and looks forward to the project's successful implementation.

Sincerely,

Laura Kliewer
MIPRC Director