

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1304

December 11, 2024

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg,

I am writing regarding the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) application for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Grant Program funding from the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program. This federal funding will enable the Rock Island Connection project (P2) to construct a flyover bridge between Belt Junction and Metra Commuter Rail's Rock Island District (RID) line.

The P2 Project will enable Metra to shift its Southwest Service (SWS) trains to the RID line, reducing congestion and conflicts between freight and passenger service in the heavily trafficked Belt Junction. Commuter trips would terminate at LaSalle Street Station instead of Chicago's Union Station, shortening average travel time for commuters and enabling an expansion of Amtrak's intercity passenger rail service in the Midwest.

This project is a key part of the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (CIP). The first two development components are on schedule for completion in 2026, with the next phase also commencing that year. Completing the P2 Project is critical to ensuring the full benefits of the overall design.

The CREATE Program's goals align with this plan as it will improve rail operations in the Chicago metropolitan area and improve the quality of life in the community. The 75th St. CIP project includes investments in education and workforce opportunities and community mobility improvements. The P2 Project will enhance the safety and accessibility of the community while enhancing transportation systems and supporting broader economic growth.

Please give full and fair consideration to the Illinois Department of Transportation's application. If you require additional information, please contact my Downstate Director, Kaylee Gholson, at (217) 492-4062.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator