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Washington, DC 20515

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December 5th, 2024

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

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write to express my support for the Illinois Department of Transportation's application for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Grant Program on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program through the Department of Transportation.

The project aims to build a flyover bridge between Belt Junction and Metra's Rock Island District (RID) line. Implementing P2 will allow Metra's SouthWest Service (SWS) trains to use the RID line, reducing congestion and conflicts between freight and passenger trains at Belt Junction, where 30 Metra and 90 freight trains cross daily. This change will also shift commuter trips to LaSalle Street Station, shortening travel times, and free up capacity at Chicago Union Station for expanded Amtrak service in the Midwest.

This project is part of the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (CIP), a key component of the CREATE Program, consisting of four linked improvements. Project P2 aims to fulfill the CREATE Program's overall goals to improve rail operations in the Chicago metropolitan area and improve the quality of life in neighborhoods near rails. Furthermore, the project improves efficient movement of people and consumer goods throughout the nation. The 75th St CIP project invests in K-12 education, workforce opportunities, and community mobility improvements (CMI) to enhance safety, accessibility, quality of life, and local transportation. P2 promotes economic growth and benefits neighboring communities with cleaner air, reduced railroad delays, and improved development opportunities.

I urge your full and fair consideration for the Illinois Department of Transportation's application for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Grant Program on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program through the Department. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Bill Foster

Member of Congress