

# Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors

AECOM

April 29, 2024

National Railroad  
Construction and  
Maintenance  
Association

NASCO – North  
American Strategy for  
Competitiveness

The Northwest  
Seaport Alliance

Nossaman LLP

Orange County  
Transportation  
Authority

Pacific NorthWest  
Economic Region

Port Authority of  
New York & New  
Jersey

Port Houston

Port Newark Container  
Terminal

Port of Hueneme

Port of Long Beach

Port of Los Angeles

Port of New Orleans

Port of Oakland

Port of San Diego

Port Tampa Bay

Port of Vancouver  
USA

Ports America  
Chesapeake

Prime Focus, LLC

Puget Sound Regional  
Council

San Diego Association  
of Governments

Southern California  
Association of  
Governments

Tennessee  
Department of  
Transportation

Washington State  
Department of  
Transportation

Will County Center for  
Economic  
Development

WSP

Alameda Corridor-East  
Project, San Gabriel Valley  
Council of Governments

California Department  
of Transportation

Cambridge  
Systematics, Inc.

Canaveral Port Authority

Cassidy & Associates

Chicago Metropolitan  
Agency for Planning

City of Chicago

City of Industry

COMPASS – Community  
Planning Association of  
Southwest Idaho

DCLI

Florida Department  
of Transportation

Florida East  
Coast Railway

Florida Ports Council

Florida Transportation  
Builders' Association, Inc.

Freight Mobility Strategic  
Investment Board  
(Washington State)

Great Lakes Dredge &  
Dock Company

HNTB Corporation

Intermodal Association  
of North America

Jacobs

Joliet Arsenal  
Development Authority

Kootenai Metropolitan  
Planning Organization

Los Angeles  
County Metropolitan  
Transportation Authority

Majestic Realty Co.

Maricopa Association of  
Governments

Memphis Chamber of  
Commerce

Moffatt & Nichol

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary

United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

The Illinois Department of Transportation is seeking MPDG and CRISI funds on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program for its **EW2a Project**. The Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors (CAGTC) is a national group dedicated to improving our nation's freight infrastructure and its membership includes key CREATE Program partners.

The CREATE Program will utilize MPDG and CRISI funding to create the first segment of the Belt Junction and 80th Street Junction Replacements project (EW2a), which includes reconfiguring the Belt Railway Company main tracks between the Dan Ryan Expressway and Belt Junction. This project will help alleviate congestion at Chicago's Belt Junction, the most congested rail chokepoint in North America, where 30 Metra and 90 freight trains cross each other's paths each day.

This project is a key part of the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (CIP), a grouping of four improvements that make up the most complex portion of the CREATE Program and have been advanced as a single project. The first two CIP components began construction in October 2022 with the support of a 2018 INFRA grant and is scheduled for completion in 2026.

Project EW2a aligns with the CREATE Program's overall goals to improve rail operations in the Chicago metropolitan area while reducing the environmental impacts of rail operations on the public. The project will increase supply chain efficiency by supporting the movement of goods and people along important railway systems and communities. In addition to supporting broader economic growth by providing education and workforce opportunities, EW2a will also improve air quality, reduce railroad delays, and improve economic development for neighboring communities.

We hope you will consider the merits of the CREATE Program's **EW2a Project**. As an organization, we support investments in freight infrastructure, and we encourage USDOT to continue investing in goods movement projects through the MPDG and CRISI programs. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Elaine Nettle  
Executive Director