

# United States Senate

May 13, 2024

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write to express my support for the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's *Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Opportunity (MPDG)* and *Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)* discretionary grant programs. Funds from the program will be used to complete the installation of the EW2a Segment of the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project (CIP).

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) impacts every resident and visitor of Illinois. IDOT is responsible for designing and maintaining a transportation system that supports the interconnectivity and mobility of more than 12 million Illinoisans. IDOT, on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program will use the funds to complete the first segment of the Belt Junction and 80th Street Junction Replacements project, known as EW2a. Project segment EW2a will reconfigure Belt Railway Company (BRC), Norfolk Southern (NS) and Metra tracks and rebuild century-old railroad structures, including 86 bridges, over local streets in three Southside Chicago neighborhoods. A third dedicated BRC main track will be constructed, eliminating route conflicts for freight and Metra trains. This will alleviate rail congestion and improve neighborhood interconnectivity as these improvements will set the stage for future projects that will increase commuter rail service capacity. This host of improvements will 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. Not only does EW2a support broader economic growth, but neighboring communities also benefit from cleaner air, reduced railroad delays and improved development opportunities. Beyond these local and regional benefits, these improvements will have a significant positive impact on the national supply chain.

As a U.S. Senator and member of the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, I have made it a priority to modernize Illinois' transportation and infrastructure systems. IDOT's application falls within the traditional bounds of the *MPDG* and *CRISI* discretionary grant programs and will improve transit safety, mobility and sustainability of the Chicago metropolitan region and beyond.

Please accept this letter of support for the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) application to the U.S Department of Transportation's *Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant Opportunity (MPDG)* and *Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI)* discretionary grant program. In keeping with your existing rules and regulations, I urge you to give the application full and fair consideration. If you have any questions, please contact my Downstate Director, Randy Sikowski, at (217) 528-6124.

Sincerely,



Tammy Duckworth  
United States Senator