

NIKKI BUDZINSKI
13TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

WASHINGTON OFFICE
1717 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-2371

SPRINGFIELD OFFICE
133 SOUTH 4TH STREET, SUITE 300
SPRINGFIELD, IL 62701
(217) 814-2880



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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RANKING MEMBER
TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION

June 16th, 2026

The Honorable David Fink, Administrator
Federal Railroad Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Fink,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) application, on behalf of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) Program, for funding through the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program. The CREATE Program is the largest public-private partnership of its kind, involving the nation's rail industry and all levels of government.

Federal funding will advance CREATE's Rock Island Connection Project (P2), the next phase of the 75th Street Corridor Improvement Project. The project will construct a flyover bridge at Belt Junction, the nation's most congested rail chokepoint, reducing conflicts between freight and passenger trains and improving the flow of rail traffic throughout the region.

The existing corridor serves both freight and passenger rail operations, creating recurring delays and operational constraints. By rerouting Metra SouthWest Service (SWS) trains via the new P2 connection, the project will eliminate a major source of congestion at Belt Junction, improve freight mobility, mitigate delays, and reduce the state of good repair backlog.

The P2 project is also critical to improving passenger rail performance across the Chicago terminal and throughout the Midwest. Chicago Union Station, the busiest station in Amtrak's National Network, serves nearly 17 million passengers annually and functions as a vital hub for local, regional, and national passenger rail service. By allowing Metra SWS trains to operate through LaSalle Street Station instead of Union Station, P2 will free critical capacity, improve reliability, reduce conflicts between freight and passenger trains, and support more efficient passenger rail operations across the region and the nation.

Once again, I want to express my support for IDOT's proposed Rock Island Connection Project. I am confident that this project will increase the efficiency, capacity, safety, and reliability of passenger and freight rail through the nation's premier freight hub, enhancing supply chain resilience and driving economic growth nationwide. I urge you to give their application full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,

Member of Congress