



March 5, 2009

The Honorable Richard Durbin
U.S. Senator
309 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Durbin:

On January 26, 2009, we wrote to you asking for your help to advocate for a bigger part of the federal stimulus funding to be directed toward transportation capital improvements. At that time, the proposed stimulus funding for transportation was \$43 billion of the proposed \$550 billion bill. On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the \$789 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, of which only \$48 billion was directed to transportation specifically. Though we appreciate the investment made to transportation infrastructure in the stimulus bill, we must continue focusing on the needs of our transportation system.

In just a few short months, the federal surface transportation program will be up for reauthorization. This legislation is vitally important to improving and enhancing our transportation network. Currently, the Transportation for Illinois Coalition (TFIC) has nine policy groups formulating recommendations for the upcoming reauthorization. The policy groups are working on issues concerning bridges, corridors of national significance, earmark reform, freight, intercity passenger rail, interstate reconstruction/expansion, private-public partnerships, programmatic and planning and public transit.

The upcoming transportation reauthorization gives us the opportunity to create more jobs, improve our environment and keep our citizens safe, and we need your support to be successful in this endeavor. TFIC plans to have a reauthorization recommendation report available by May and looks forward to working with you and your colleagues to promote the necessary transportation infrastructure reforms and funding increases.

Sincerely,

Jim Reilly
Chairman, RTA
TFIC Co-Chair

Michael Kleinik
Director, Chicago Laborers District Council-LMCC
TFIC Co-Chair