



January 26, 2009

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

Dear Senator Durbin:

On behalf of the 70-plus organizations in the Transportation for Illinois Coalition, we are writing to ask you to help advocate for a bigger slice of the federal stimulus funding to be directed toward transportation capital improvements. As you know, the national economy faces difficult and trying circumstances. Government spending, if wisely done, can help us turn the corner.

Spending on capital projects that will improve and enhance our transportation network **will produce thousands of well-paying jobs**. In addition, this type of spending is lasting in its impact. The investment we make today in the transportation infrastructure will benefit Americans and the American economy for years to come.

We heard recently that only \$43 billion of the proposed \$550 billion in spending being proposed in the stimulus package would be directed to infrastructure and even less of that to transportation specifically. The latest numbers we've seen show Illinois receiving roughly \$1 billion in highway funds and \$500 million in transit funding. Those numbers should be increased. Illinois has up to \$1.5 billion in highway projects and \$700 million in transit projects that are ready to go quickly and billions more soon after that. We hope that you will take an active role in increasing the spending for transportation infrastructure.

Thank you for your support of the transportation infrastructure. We look forward to a productive partnership with you and your colleagues on behalf of all Illinois residents.

Sincerely,

Jim Reilly
Chair, RTA

Mike Zahn
Chair, Operating Engineers State Council