

# Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

April 28, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

RE: High-Speed Rail, Chicago to St. Louis

The Honorable Ray LaHood  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear President Obama and Secretary LaHood:

We write to commend your dedication to high-speed passenger rail and the recognition that it should be an integral part of our nation's transportation network.

Developing a high-speed passenger rail network throughout the United States will take a great commitment at both the federal and state levels. We believe this investment is critical to building a multi-modal transportation system network where riders are connected to airports, bus stations, highways and their communities. This investment will also reduce congestion on our highways and in our airways, which are already exceeding capacity, reduce our dependence on foreign sources of oil and make our transportation network more resilient in times of national emergency.

We would like to highlight the importance and benefit of the corridor between Chicago and St. Louis and urge that it be given top priority as you award funding for high-speed rail projects. The state of Illinois has already invested \$143 million in the Chicago-St. Louis corridor and has completed an environmental impact statement. Recovery Act funding would be used for track, signal and other corridor upgrades, as well as new equipment for trains. In addition, it would prepare the way for additional routes, such as St. Louis to Kansas City.

Thank you for your consideration of the Chicago-St. Louis corridor. We look forward to working with you as we build the nation's high speed rail network and modernize our national transportation system.

Sincerely,

Jerry J. Cortello

Paul F. Smith

Billy T. Nash

Jan Selukowsky

Frank P. Ostering

Mike Coughlin

Judy Beggitt

Phil Hare

Russ Carnahan

Wm. Lacy Clay

John B. <sup>FL-19</sup>

Frank P. Mangullo

Danny K. Davis

Bill Foster

Debra Halverson

Ann Schuk