

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 8, 2023

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

The Honorable Shalanda Young
Director
White House Office of Management and Budget
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Secretary Buttigieg and Director Young:

We write in support of the City of Chicago's Red Line Extension (RLE) project. As the project progresses within the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grant (CIG) program pipeline, we request that the Biden Administration provide the project with the maximum 60 percent federal cost share for which it is eligible. In line with the Administration's equity goals, the RLE will provide much-needed access to transit for tens of thousands of low-income residents of Chicago's South Side and provide a massive economic boost to a long-neglected area of the city.

The 5.6 mile extension of the Chicago Transit Authority's Red Line to Chicago's southern border is the first rail transit extension in Chicago in 30 years. It will serve roughly 100,000 people, most of whom are from low-income households on Chicago's South Side, and will benefit tens of thousands of working families and individuals in surrounding suburbs and communities. Many residents spend several hours each day commuting to jobs, schools, and area businesses. The project has significant support within the service area and across the City, and Mayor Lightfoot and the Chicago City Council recently committed \$959 million in local funding to the project by creating the single-largest tax increment financing district in the city's history.

The RLE advances the Administration's equity goals as expressed in President Biden's recent Executive Order regarding the "Justice 40" initiative. In the project area, the median income of \$42,000 is well below national, regional, and city averages, and the unemployment rate is 19 percent, compared to eight percent citywide. One in four residents lives below the federal poverty line and more than one in five lacks reliable access to a car. The project also provides meaningful environmental benefits to an area of Chicago long-plagued by industrial pollution. And RLE's four new fully accessible rail stations will provide people with disabilities with more options for getting around. This is crucial in the RLE project area, where 16 percent of residents live with disabilities, exceeding both city and county averages.

The project also will provide an economic boost for a long-neglected area of the City and surrounding suburbs, producing an estimated 25,000 jobs in the coming years, while generating nearly \$2 billion in pay to workers on the project, and more than \$5 billion in total business output. The City of Chicago also has targeted areas near future RLE stations for significant and unprecedented local investment.

The RLE will set a new standard for transit investments across America and provide access to transit for tens of thousands of low-income residents. We urge the Administration to provide the maximum federal share. Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to hearing back from you.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



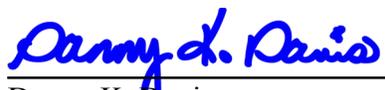
Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Jonathan L. Jackson
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Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
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Sean Casten
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