

# **Duckworth's bipartisan bill to support Illinois jobs passes both chambers**

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*The legislation, Duckworth's first proposal in the Senate, passes both the Senate and House in record time*

– In record time, U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth's (D-IL) bipartisan bill to support Illinois jobs and support infrastructure projects is on its way to the President's desk to be signed into law less than 4 months after she was sworn in, having passed the Senate unanimously just 64 days into her first term. The bill would protect infrastructure projects from needless bureaucratic delays by rolling back a misguided U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) rule that enables the governors of neighboring states to delay or block infrastructure improvements in Illinois. Based on DOT analysis, enacting this bill will save taxpayers an estimated \$86.3 million annually. To secure the legislation's passage, Duckworth assembled a bipartisan coalition of co-sponsors: U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) and Todd Young (R-IN) each supported her legislation. Rep. Dan Lipinski (IL-3) sponsored the companion measure in the House.

**“When I was sworn in as Illinois’s newest U.S. Senator, I said I was eager to get to work on common-sense solutions for Illinois families that members on both sides of the aisle can agree on,”** said Senator Duckworth. **“My first Senate bill and its swift passage through both chambers shows that I was serious, and I’m glad it’s on its way to becoming law. Red tape shouldn’t hurt our economy or stifle job growth, so it’s about time we roll back this misguided MPO rule. I’ll keep working to support hard-working Illinoisans and help grow good-paying Illinois jobs.”**

Since arriving in the Senate, she highlighted transportation issues while questioning U. S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao during her confirmation hearing before the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, video of which available [here](#). She has also addressed transportation issues relevant to the bill at several events across Illinois, including roundtable discussions with elected leaders and transportation officials in [Chicago](#) and [Quincy](#), as well as at the [groundbreaking](#) of a new rail car facility today in Chicago.

**“Forcing MPOs to merge with other MPOs in the vicinity, even across state lines, would cause significant delays and disruptions in getting important transportation projects done,”** said Rep. Lipinski. **“Mayors, planners, and transit agencies from across the country have reached out to me over the past few months to express their opposition to this rule, and it’s opposed by every major trade association representing the professionals who staff MPOs around the country.”**

The DOT rule that Duckworth's bipartisan legislation would repeal, called the “MPO Coordination and Planning Area Reform” rule, was finalized in December 2016, despite

widespread opposition from transportation stakeholders throughout the country. It requires certain MPOs to merge with their counterparts in other states if they are designated by the U.S. Census Bureau as sharing an urban area. If allowed to go forward, this rule would have forced Illinois's 16 MPOs to merge with MPOs in Wisconsin and Indiana, and empowered the Governors of Wisconsin and Indiana to potentially block critical transportation improvement projects in Illinois. The DOT estimates that rescinding the MPO rule would save taxpayers an estimated \$86.3 million annually, which translates into savings of \$431.5 million over 5 years, and \$863 million over 10 years.

Senator Duckworth's bipartisan legislation, which passed Congress in record time, is endorsed by the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) and Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP).