

# **Durbin announces Illinois transportation priorities included Omnibus appropriations bill**

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, today announced that the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017 includes numerous transportation priorities for the State of Illinois. President Donald Trump’s proposed budget would have dramatically cut transportation infrastructure funding, which would have had a devastating impact on projects across Illinois.

**“Investing in our transportation infrastructure creates jobs, revitalizes neighborhoods, and grows small businesses across Illinois. While transportation agencies in Illinois are working hard to improve their infrastructure and services, Washington must also do its part,”** said Durbin. **“Thankfully, this bill ignored President Trump’s proposed budget, which slashed transportation investments, and instead maintains—and in some cases increases—funding for vital federal grant and funding programs. Fortunately, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle saw the value in transportation funding programs.”**

The bill was passed by the House on Wednesday and by the Senate on Thursday. It will need to be signed by President Trump to become law.

According to Durbin, the following projects, programs, and provisions are beneficial to Illinois:

### **Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies**

***TIGER Grant Program.*** \$500 million in nationwide funding for the Transportation Infrastructure Grants and Economic Reinvestment (TIGER) grant program, which allows local communities to apply directly to the Department of Transportation (DOT) for funding of nationally significant transportation projects. This program is especially helpful to communities engaged in multimodal projects that improve connections to different transportation networks. Several projects have been funded under the TIGER grant program in Illinois including: the Springfield Rail Improvement Project, the Warehouse District in Peoria, the Multimodal Facilities in Moline, Normal and Alton and the CREATE project in Chicago.

***Capital Investment Grants.*** \$2.4 billion in nationwide funding for Capital Investment Grants, an increase of \$236 million, which communities around the country use to build and improve subway, commuter rail, light rail, and bus rapid transit projects. \$100 million in Core Capacity funds, a competitive grant program Durbin created as part of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), was specifically allocated in this bill to help fund the Chicago Transit Authority’s modernization of the Red and Purple lines.

***Amtrak.*** \$1.495 billion in nationwide funding for Amtrak, a \$105 million increase, to support the over 4.6 million riders and 56 Amtrak trains that run through Illinois each day. By providing adequate funding to Amtrak, more than 500 communities in 46 states across the country will continue to see improved passenger rail service.

***Highway Investments.*** \$43.2 billion in nationwide formula funding for highways, a \$905 million increase. This funding is at the FAST Act fully authorized level. Federal funding comprises 80 percent of the funds included in the Illinois Department of Transportation's multi-year highway improvement program.

***Transit Investments.*** \$9.3 billion in nationwide formula funding for public transportation, a \$753 million increase. This funding is at the FAST Act fully authorized level.

***Airport Investments.*** \$3.35 billion in nationwide grant funding to support airport improvement projects around the country. \$150 million in funding to provide rural areas with reliable commercial air service through the Essential Air Service program. This program supports air service in Quincy, Decatur, and Marion, Illinois.

***Rail Safety.*** \$98 million for newly authorized rail safety and state of good repair grants across the country. This includes \$68 million for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement Grants to support highway-rail grade crossing improvements and the implementation of Positive Train Control safety technology.