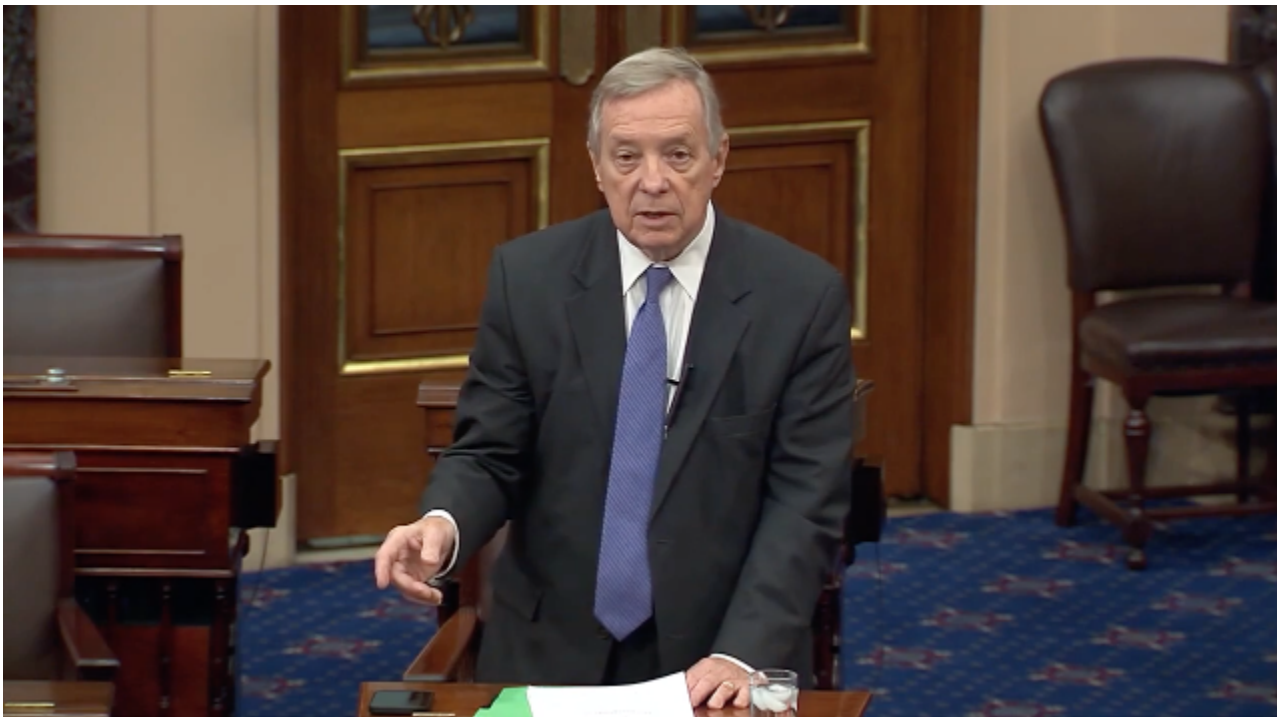


Durbin Urges Department Of Transportation To Allocate Rail Grants To Springfield Rail Improvements Project In 2024

December 20 2023 3:34 PM



WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) today sent a letter to Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg urging him to strongly consider the Springfield Rail Improvements Project (SRIP) for federal rail grants in 2024, as the project was not awarded any federal support in 2023. SRIP, a joint effort between the City of Springfield, Sangamon County, and the Illinois Department of Transportation, aims to relocate all passenger and freight traffic from the Third Street Corridor to Tenth Street in Springfield.

Durbin began his letter by recognizing the Department of Transportation's (DOT) previous support for the project, including its most recent RAISE grant allocation in 2022. However, the final portion of the project, including building a new transportation center with train, bus, and parking access, cannot be completed without additional federal funding. Because SRIP was not a recipient of any 2023 DOT grants, the project will not be finalized in 2025 as Illinois state leaders had hoped.

"Since 2014, I have greatly appreciated the U.S. Department of Transportation's support in securing more than \$90 million in federal funding for the project, including its most recent 2022 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant. With this support, Springfield has been able to construct underpasses at Carpenter Street, Ash Street, and Laurel Street, as well as new double-track rail bridges at Fifth and Sixth Streets, among other work that is underway. Through this investment, SRIP has proven itself to be one of the most successful and efficient examples of project coordination across the local, state, and federal levels of government," Durbin wrote.

"As of today, the City has only one remaining segment to complete the entire Tenth Street Corridor as it envisioned nearly a decade ago," Durbin continued the letter. "Springfield's goal was to complete this Corridor by 2025, and the total cost of the remaining work to do so is roughly \$138.5 million. However, despite the City applying for several federal rail grants this year, I was disappointed to see SRIP was not selected for any new funding. This means the City's long-standing goal to complete the Corridor by 2025 is no longer feasible."

Durbin concluded his letter by reiterating the importance of improving connectivity in Central Illinois, spurring economic development along the way. Durbin urged Secretary Buttigieg to strongly consider SRIP for any available federal rail grants in 2024, which would allow the project to finish as close to its original timeline as possible.

"While this has been disappointing to all who are invested in the project, it is my hope that you will strongly consider SRIP's applications for any federal rail grants in 2024, so the project can move forward. The remaining work is shovel-ready, and the City of Springfield and its partners are eager to move the project across the finish line after a decade of effort," Durbin wrote.

"I look forward to working with you to capitalize and expand on the previous \$90 million of federal investment in SRIP to help Springfield complete the Tenth Street Corridor," Durbin concluded his letter.

Durbin has long been a supporter of SRIP. In June, he [met](#) with the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce to discuss the project's impact on regional transit. He also helped secure more than \$90 million in federal funding for SRIP since it began back in

2014, including two awards through the RAISE discretionary grant program—\$19.8 million in August 2022 and \$13.5 million in November 2021.

A copy of the letter is available [here](#).