

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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October 26, 2016

The Honorable Daniel R. Elliott III, Chairman
United States Surface Transportation Board
395 E. Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20423

Dear Chairman Elliott,

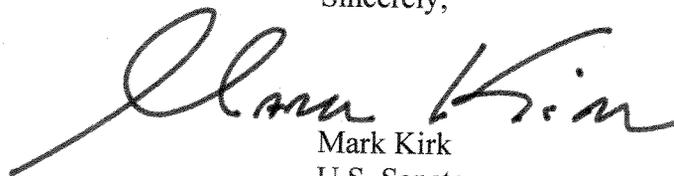
I respectfully request your assistance to resolve a dispute over a Congressionally declared project of regional and national significance in my home state of Illinois. As the venue for surface transportation conflict resolution, I understand one of the core functions of the United States Surface Transportation Board is to encourage negotiations and resolutions to unique and complex problems, especially those with significant regional and national impact. Therefore, I urge you to meet with the Canadian Pacific Railway (CP) and the Illinois Tollway Authority regarding the creation of western roadway access into O'Hare International Airport to promote economic development and alleviate traffic congestion.

In June 2016, CP rejected a series of design features proposed by the Illinois Tollway Authority to improve western access to O'Hare, despite previous good faith negotiations between the two parties and significant federal taxpayer investment. Increasingly, I have heard from Illinois Tollway Authority and local mayors with concerns that CP is no longer working to advance the \$3.4 billion Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project.

Together with expansion of O'Hare Airport, the Elgin O'Hare Western Access Project would generate a \$29 million yearly increase in local tax revenues, while creating an estimated 65,000 jobs and saving commuters \$145 million a year in both fuel and time by 2040. The project would also support the O'Hare Modernization Program, a multibillion dollar effort to facilitate significant economic development in northern Illinois, reinforcing Chicago's position as a national transportation hub.

The current dispute jeopardizes both future job creation and over \$140 million in federal support already dedicated to the project. I respectfully request your assistance to bring the Illinois Tollway Authority, local Mayors, and CP back to the negotiating table. Please work with my office to coordinate a meeting time with these stakeholders that would work well for you. I look forward to your response and to speaking with you soon to discuss how we can move this vital project forward to completion.

Sincerely,



Mark Kirk
U.S. Senator

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