

MARCH 3, 2004

**SCHAKOWSKY, LOCAL & STATE OFFICIALS SEEK FUNDING
FOR DES PLAINES RAILROAD
CROSSING TO INCREASE
SAFETY AND RELIEVE DELAYS**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), State Senator Susan Garrett and State Representatives Rosemary Mulligan and Elaine Nekritz today continued their efforts to secure funding for railroad crossings in Des Plaines to increase safety and relieve delays.

In a letter to Illinois's Secretary of Transportation Timothy Martin, they requested *"that two railroad crossings in Des Plaines be added to the list of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) program's planned grade separations: Thacker Street at Union Pacific Railroad and Des Plaines River Road at Union Pacific Railroad."*

Below is the letter to Secretary Martin:

March 3, 2004

Dear Secretary Martin:

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We are writing to request that two railroad crossings in Des Plaines be added to the list of the Chicago Region Environmental and Transportation Efficiency (CREATE) program's planned grade separations: Thacker Street at Union Pacific Railroad and Des Plaines River Road at Union Pacific Railroad.

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Des Plaines is a point of significant train congestion and is unique in the metropolitan area since it is home to the Deval Tower station where three rail lines come together. Each day, an average of 59 freight trains and 74 commuter trains pass through Des Plaines. There is a serious need to ease conflicts with other forms of transportation in the area.

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There are 33 at-grade railroad crossings in Des Plaines. This causes severe motor vehicle congestion, delays and pollution, while creating serious safety problems. Emergency vehicles are often delayed by trains, and the at-grade crossings are a safety hazard for motorists and pedestrians.

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We applaud the CREATE program's plan to reduce the problems caused by increased railroad traffic in the Chicago region and look forward to participating in its projects. Given the large numbers of at-grade crossings and the high volume of train traffic in Des Plaines, we are concerned that there are no projects in or even near the city to help relieve the delays.

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We hope that you will give every consideration to including these two crossings in the grade separation projects.