

JUNE 19, 2003

FEDERAL, STATE AND COUNTY OFFICIALS INCREASE PRESSURE ON CTA TO FULFILL COMMITMENT ON VIADUCTS

EVANSTON, IL - While applauding the Chicago Transit Authority's (CTA) announcement of new bus routes in Evanston, U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), State Senator Jeff Schoenberg (IL 9), State Representative Julie Hamos (IL 18) and Cook County Commissioner Larry Suffredin (13) today continued to urge the CTA to fulfill its commitment to repair dilapidated viaducts in Evanston and across the 9th Congressional District.

According to the CTA, of the 114 viaducts that comprise their system, the 15 viaducts in the most desperate need of repair are located in the 9th Congressional District. Of these viaducts determined to be in the 'poorest condition', 40% are located in Evanston.

"While I am pleased that the residents of Evanston will have access to greater public transportation, I believe there are other issues that must be immediately addressed by the CTA. My constituents are facing a dangerous and serious public safety hazard every day the CTA delays action to renovate viaducts in Evanston and across the district. That is why it is critical for the CTA to implement an aggressive plan and fulfill its commitment in dollars to help minimize the potential safety risks these viaducts present to motorists, pedestrians, and CTA riders," said Schakowsky.

Rep. Hamos said, "While the CTA offers up a new bus service as an example of their commitment to improving service in Evanston, the viaducts that stand a few feet away in either direction show their negligence towards our most pressing need. We were supportive of the CTA and the State's massive Illinois FIRST transportation program specifically because we understood that the Evanston community would benefit greatly through the repair of these viaducts."

County Commissioner Suffredin said, "It's been four years since the CTA highlighted the poor condition of the Evanston viaducts which are the oldest in the entire CTA system and announced viaduct improvements throughout Evanston's Purple Line. Now is the time for the CTA to deliver on its promise to the people of Evanston and repair the viaducts."

State Senator Schoenberg said, "I am very disappointed with how the CTA has handled funds originally programmed for the Evanston viaducts. CTA President Frank Kreusi made a commitment to me and other officials that the Evanston viaducts are a top priority for the CTA, unfortunately he has not followed through on that promise."