



Transportation Communications Union/IAM

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers



God Bless America

Robert A. Scardelletti, *National President*

LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT

Ron Kloos, *National Vice President / National Legislative Director*

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March 14, 2012

The Honorable Ray LaHood, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

On behalf of the Transportation Communications Union/IAM (TCU), I write in support of Metra's MD-W Fox River Bridge grant application through the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER IV) discretionary grant program. The MD-W Fox River Bridge is an important component of Metra's MD-W commuter rail line and the region's freight rail network.

If awarded, the MD-W Fox River Bridge Improvement Project will produce shorter, more reliable, and less expensive commutes; move freight more quickly and efficiently; benefit highway travel as more commuters and shippers use the more reliable trains; and provide job creation in the region. Metra is a vital partner to rail labor and this project will help to protect existing jobs and put more people to work in the region.

The MD-W Fox River Bridge carries 49 Metra commuter rail trains and six Canadian Pacific (CP) freight trains each weekday. The bridge—originally constructed in 1881—is nearing the end of its useful life and needs to be replaced. The 500-foot bridge is the only single-track segment on the MD-W rail line between Elgin and downtown Chicago, creating a bottleneck at either end of the bridge. Trains must reduce speed to move through the interlocking and over the aging bridge, and any blockages on the single-track segment delay passenger and freight trains throughout the corridor. This project will replace the MD-W Fox River Bridge with a completely new structure, expanded to accommodate two tracks and controlled by a modern signal system. The newly installed infrastructure will eliminate the local speed restriction, improve the line's reliability and operational flexibility, reduce maintenance costs, and help ensure the continued efficient operation of the Chicago region's rail network.

I respectfully ask that the Administration consider these views as you move forward on this important matter.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R.A. Scardelletti". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "R" and a long, sweeping tail.

Robert A. Scardelletti
National President