



# 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***

**Mark Taylor, *Asst. National Legislative Director***

**William C. Kelaher, *Asst. National Legislative Director***

May 12, 2014

The Honorable Anthony Foxx  
Secretary  
United States Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

On behalf of the Transportation Communications Union/IAM (TCU), I write in support of Metra's application for a TIGER VI grant to support the implementation of Positive Train Control (PTC).

This project aims to update signal equipment at 29 locations on Metra-owned rail corridors, which are currently outdated and not capable of supporting PTC. Installing the signal equipment will require less frequent maintenance and testing and most importantly increase safety for maintenance crews and the traveling public. The new equipment will also provide increased reliability and enhanced safety features for the operation of Metra commuter trains, Amtrak intercity trains, and freight traffic. These improvements will reduce delays, resulting in savings in both fuel and emissions. Despite the challenges and cost of implementation, this grant will ensure that necessary safety improvements are completed in a timely fashion. 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.

As you know, in 2008 Congress passed the Railway Safety Improvement Act (RSIA) requiring commuter railroads to implement PTC on more than 4,000 locomotives and passenger cars with control cabs, and 8,500 miles of track by December 31, 2015. In the Chicago region, approximately 300,000 riders rely on Metra each and every weekday to travel to their jobs and back home. The FRA estimates that it will cost more than \$2 billion for commuter railroads across the country to install this technology. In the Chicago region alone, Metra estimates that PTC will cost the agency \$235 million. In order to meet the mandate, Metra would have to divert

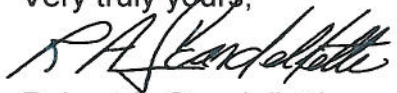
funding from critical capital investments. But like many public agencies, Metra faces challenging budgets. The situation is compounded by shrinking federal capital funds, reduced state budgets, and a significant state-of-good-repair maintenance backlog.

Safety is priority number one in the rail industry and we strive to ensure that we do everything in our power to perform in the safest manner possible. I believe that implementation PTC will help Metra accomplish even safer service, but I understand that there are significant technological and financial challenges that must be addressed. The financial support from the Department of Transportation through the TIGER grant program would be instrumental in helping to install this important safety program.

Our nation's publicly-funded commuter railroads simply cannot shoulder the costs of PTC implementation alone. These railroads are an important mode of transportation and are important to many regional economies, including the state of Illinois.

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 written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert A. Scardelletti  
National President