



4765 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago, IL 60625  
773-334-6758

For Immediate Release

July 13, 2009

Contact: Rick Harnish  
Executive Director  
Midwest High Speed Rail Association

Office: 773-334-6758  
Cell: 312-339-0116  
[www.midwesthsr.org](http://www.midwesthsr.org)

## **High speed rail advocates applaud signing of Illinois capital bill**

Statement by Rick Harnish, executive director, Midwest High Speed Rail Association

“Governor Quinn and the General Assembly, especially Senator Martin Sandoval and Representative Elaine Nekritz, must be applauded for funding the modernization of Illinois' railroad network.

High-speed trains are environmentally friendly, reduce our dependence on foreign oil and create jobs and economic activity.

With the governor's signature of the capital bill, Illinois becomes a national leader in high speed rail. The \$850 million for rail infrastructure in the legislation is the largest state capital investment in railroads in the nation outside of California.

By making its own investment in high-speed rail, Illinois is solidifying its chances of receiving a larger portion of the \$8 billion high-speed rail federal funds under the stimulus.

The legislation signed today provides not only \$400 million for high-speed rail and \$150 million for Amtrak-related improvements, but, \$300 million for CREATE, which will address many of the bottlenecks in and around Chicago that have plagued freight and passenger trains nationwide.

These funds will be used for immediate construction work on already planned projects such as the 110 mph St. Louis-Chicago rail line, and Amtrak extensions to Rockford-Galena, the Quad Cities and other initiatives.

Without Governor Quinn's vision and direct leadership, this crucial funding would not be a part of the capital program.”

### **About the Midwest High Speed Rail Association**

The Midwest High Speed Rail Association is a membership-based non-profit organization advocating the development of fast, frequent and dependable passenger trains linking the entire Midwest. We believe that a strong network of fast trains will make the Midwest a more attractive place to live and do business while slowing the growth of auto congestion and its related energy and pollution impacts.