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CTA Put Into Tough Spot

Earlier today, the Illinois House of Representatives failed to pass a bill designed to increase funding for transit agencies statewide and make important oversight changes.

Now, the state is just two weeks away from the first round of service cuts, including the elimination of most Metra feeder buses, frequency reductions and increased fares. Subsequent cuts will include weekend service on both Pace and Metra.

“This is an embarrassment for a city and a state that are competing for the Olympics,” said Rick Harnish, Executive Director of the Transit Riders’ Alliance. “Not only is a strong transit system required for such a major event, but our inability to provide for such a basic service will impact the judges’ decision.”

“The Olympic bid isn’t all that is at stake,” continued Harnish. “Every day, people make choices about where to live, locate a business or to just visit. A strong transit network, and the spin off benefits it provides, plays a major role in all of those decisions.”

And it isn’t just Northeast Illinois. Transit use is growing in Downstate communities too—AND it will grow even more as gasoline prices continue to rise. The transit growth Chicago is experiencing today will hit Rockford, the Quad Cities and Decatur tomorrow. Our legislators need to get the whole state ready.

“Home owners should be very angry,” said Harnish. “Housing values throughout Illinois will go down on September 17th because Springfield leaders spent the summer playing political games.”

The Transit Riders Alliance is a project of the Midwest High Speed Rail Association, a member-supported non-profit educational organization promoting the development of fast, frequent and dependable train service connecting the entire Midwest. Our members include business leaders, mayors and individuals that want real travel choice.